

THE DETHRONEMENT OF STALIN



*Full Text of the
Khrushchev Speech*

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INTRODUCTION

By

A STUDENT OF SOVIET AFFAIRS

Khrushchev's indictment of Stalin is presented here as an historical document which should speak for itself. Comment, therefore, has been kept to a minimum and the accompanying notes are mainly intended to fill in the background. About the authenticity of the document there can be no doubt, though there appear to be gaps in it. The State Department is believed to have acquired it through its agents in one of the Communist countries of Eastern Europe.

About Khrushchev's motives in speaking as he did doubts will persist. Was he trying to build up his own position by representing himself as the champion of the innocent and the oppressed, of Marshal Zhukov whom Stalin had maligned and of the soldiers whom the Generalissimo had consigned to death by giving them an impossible task to fulfil? Was he, perhaps, trying to weaken the position of some of his colleagues on the party praesidium by representing them in a light which could hardly be regarded as flattering? Whatever his other motives, his most obvious purpose was to knock Stalin off the pedestal which he himself had helped to erect. This he has done very effectively—perhaps too effectively, for the Communist party, in Russia and outside, will never be able to command after these disclosures the allegiance of many people who have in the past accepted the Kremlin's word as gospel truth.

In Russia itself, there have been rumblings of discontent, hinted at by the official press and reported by foreign travellers. Some of the discontented think that Stalin has been treated too harshly; others agree with the criticism of Stalin, but extend this to the criticism of Stalin's successors. There is no doubt that the ordinary people in Russia now think and act more freely. The party has certainly done a great deal since Stalin's death to make them feel that they are more free, but it has not taken and does not contemplate taking the final step towards freedom: it does not allow the people to criticise its political programme or the principles of its policy.

The next stage of political development in Russia will be a conflict between the party's desire to extend gradually the freedom within the limits it envisages, and the people's desire to have freedom uncircumscribed by such limits. The experiment may get out of hand in either direction: the people may grab more than the party intends to give them, or the party may reimpose the stringent controls of the past. The middle way, a gradual and controlled development of true democracy, could be taken only if the party leadership were prepared to contemplate its own extinction, and the abandonment of all it stands for. Of this there is no sign.

Certainly the present relaxation in Russia is to be welcomed—but the dictatorship, whether by one man or a small group, remains. And dictatorships from ancient times to modern, apart from being immoral, have proved in the end corrupt, inefficient, and detrimental to the people.

KHRUSHCHEV'S SPEECH TO THE PARTY

The unmasking of Stalin

The United States Department of State recently obtained from a confidential source a copy of a document which purports to be a version of the speech of N. S. Khrushchev at a session of the twentieth Party Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union on February 25, 1956. This session was limited in attendance to the delegates from the U.S.S.R. This version is understood to have been prepared for the guidance of the party leadership of a Communist party outside the U.S.S.R. Following is the text:—

Comrades! In the report of the Central Committee of the party at the 20th Congress, in a number of speeches by delegates to the Congress, and also formerly during the plenary C.C.-C.P.S.U. sessions, quite a lot has been said about the cult of the individual and about its harmful consequences.

After Stalin's death the Central Committee of the party began to implement a policy of explaining concisely and consistently that it is impermissible and foreign to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism to elevate one person, to transform him into a superman possessing supernatural characteristics akin to those of a god. Such a man supposedly knows everything, sees everything, thinks for everyone, can do anything, is infallible in his behaviour.

Such a belief about a man, and specifically about Stalin, was cultivated among us for many years.

The objective of the present report is not a thorough evaluation of Stalin's life and activity. Concerning Stalin's merits, an entirely sufficient number of books, pamphlets and studies have already been written in his lifetime. The rôle of Stalin in the preparation and execution of the Socialist revolution, in the civil war, and in the fight for the construction of Socialism in our country is universally known. Everyone knows this well. At the present we are concerned with a question which has immense importance for the party now and for the future—(we are

concerned) with how the cult of the person of Stalin has been gradually growing, the cult which became at a certain specific stage the source of a whole series of exceedingly serious and grave perversions of party principles, of party democracy, of revolutionary legality.

Because of the fact that not all as yet realise fully the practical consequences resulting from the cult of the individual, the great harm caused by the violation of the principle of collective direction of the party and because of the accumulation of immense and limitless power in the hands of a person—the Central Committee of the party considers it absolutely necessary to make the material pertaining to this matter available to the 20th Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union.

Allow me first of all to remind you how severely the classics of Marxism-Leninism denounced every manifestation of the cult of the individual. In a letter to the German political worker, Wilhelm Bloss, Marx stated :

"From my antipathy to any cult of the individual, I never made public during the existence of the International the numerous addresses from various countries which recognised my merits and which annoyed me. I did not even reply to them, except sometimes to rebuke their authors.

"Engels and I first joined the secret society of Communists on the condition that everything making for superstitious worship of authority would be deleted from its statute. Lassalle subsequently did quite the opposite."

Some time later Engels wrote :

"Both Marx and I have always been against any public manifestation with regard to individuals, with the exception of cases when it had an important purpose; and we most strongly opposed such manifestations which during our lifetime concerned us personally."

The great modesty of the genius of the revolution, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, is known. Lenin had always stressed the rôle of the people as the creator of history, the directing and organisational

rôle of the party as a living and creative organism, and also the rôle of the Central Committee.

Marxism does not negate the rôle of the leaders of the workers' class in directing the revolutionary liberation movement.

While ascribing great importance to the rôle of the leaders and organisers of the masses, Lenin at the same time mercilessly stigmatised every manifestation of the cult of the individual, inexorably combated the foreign-to-Marxism views about a "hero" and a "crowd" and countered all efforts to oppose a "hero" to the masses and to the people.

Lenin taught that the party's strength depends on its indissoluble unity with the masses, on the fact that behind the party follow the people—workers, peasants and intelligentsia. "Only he will win and retain the power," said Lenin, "who believes in the people, who submerges himself in the fountain of the living creativeness of the people."

Lenin spoke with pride about the Bolshevik Communist party as the leader and teacher of the people; he called for the presentation of all the most important questions before the opinion of knowledgeable workers, before the opinions of their party; he said: "We believe in it, we see in it the wisdom, the honour, and the conscience of our epoch."

Lenin resolutely stood against every attempt aimed at belittling or weakening the directing rôle of the party in the structure of the Soviet State. He worked out Bolshevik principles of party direction and norms of party life, stressing that the guiding principle of party leadership is its collegiality. Already during the pre-revolutionary years Lenin called the Central Committee of the party a collective of leaders and the guardian and interpreter of party principles. "During the period between Congresses," pointed out Lenin, "the Central Committee guards and interprets the principles of the party."

Underlining the rôle of the Central Committee of the party and its authority, Vladimir Ilyich pointed out: "Our Central Committee constituted itself as a closely centralised and highly authoritative group. . . ."

During Lenin's life the Central Committee of the party was a real expression of collective leadership of the party and of the nation. Being a militant Marxist-revolutionist, always unyielding in matters of principle, Lenin never imposed by force his views upon his co-workers. He tried to convince some; he patiently explained his opinions to others.*

* Lenin is represented here as the exponent of the principle of collective

Lenin always diligently observed that the norms of party life were realised, that the party statute was enforced, that the Party Congresses and the plenary sessions of the Central Committee took place at the proper intervals.

In addition to the great accomplishments of V. I. Lenin for the victory of the working class and of the working peasants, for the victory of our party and for the application of the ideas of scientific Communism to life, his acute mind expressed itself also in this that he detected in Stalin in time those negative characteristics which resulted later in grave consequences.

Fearing the future fate of the party and of the Soviet nation, pointing out that it was necessary to consider the question of transferring Stalin from the position of the Secretary-General because of the fact that Stalin is excessively rude, that he does not have a proper attitude towards his comrades, that he is capricious and abuses his power.

In December, 1922, in a letter to the Party Congress, Vladimir Ilyich wrote:

"After taking over the position of Secretary-General Comrade Stalin accumulated in his hands immeasurable power and I am not certain whether he will be always able to use this power with the required care."

This letter—a political document of tremendous importance, known in the party history as Lenin's "testament"—was distributed among the delegates to the Twentieth Party Congress. You have read it, and will undoubtedly read it again more than once. You might reflect on Lenin's plain words, in which expression is given to Vladimir Ilyich's anxiety concerning the party, the people, the State, and the future direction of party policy.

Vladimir Ilyich said:

"Stalin is excessively rude, and this defect, which can be freely tolerated in our midst and in contacts among us Com-

leadership, which Stalin later abused by making himself into a dictator. By averting one-man dictatorship in future and by following faithfully Lenin's precepts, Khrushchev says elsewhere, abuses of the kind indulged in by Stalin will be made impossible. This should be compared with Lenin's views on dictatorship: "Soviet Socialist democracy does not in any way contradict one-man management and dictatorship; the will of the class is sometimes given effect by a dictator, who sometimes does more alone and often is more than necessary." (Works, fourth Russian edition, volume 30, page 444.) Since Lenin is the fountainhead of all wisdom, could not this quotation from his works be used, if and when necessary, to re-establish one-man dictatorship, and could not many of Stalin's abuses then be repeated?

munists, becomes a defect which cannot be tolerated in one holding the position of the Secretary-General. Because of this I propose that the comrades consider the method by which Stalin would be removed from this position and by which another man would be selected for it, a man who, above all, would differ from Stalin in only one quality, namely, greater tolerance, greater loyalty, greater kindness, and more considerate attitude towards the comrades, a less capricious temper, &c."

This document of Lenin's was made known to the delegates at the thirteenth Party Congress, who discussed the question of transferring Stalin from the position of Secretary-General. The delegates declared themselves in favour of retaining Stalin in this post, hoping that he would heed the critical remarks of Vladimir Ilyich and would be able to overcome the defects which caused Lenin serious anxiety.

Comrades! The Party Congress should become acquainted with two new documents, which confirm Stalin's character as already outlined by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin in his "testament." These documents are a letter from Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya to Kamenev, who was at that time head of the Political Bureau, and a personal letter from Vladimir Ilyich Lenin to Stalin:

I will now read these documents:

"Lev Borisovitch!

"Because of a short letter which I had written in words dictated to me by Vladimir Ilyich by permission of the doctors, Stalin allowed himself yesterday an unusually rude outburst directed at me. This is not my first day in the party. During all these thirty years I have never heard from any comrade one word of rudeness. The business of the party and of Ilyich are not less dear to me than to Stalin. I need at present the maximum of self-control. What one can and what one cannot discuss with Ilyich—I know better than any doctor, because I know what makes him nervous and what does not, in any case I know better than Stalin. I am turning to you and to Grigory as to much closer comrades of V.I. and I beg you to protect me from rude interference with my private life and from vile invectives and threats. I have no doubt as to what will be the unanimous decision of the Control Commission, with which Stalin sees fit to threaten me; however, I have neither the strength nor the time to waste on this foolish quarrel. And I am a living person and my nerves are strained to the utmost."

Nadezhda Konstantinovna wrote this letter on December 23, 1922. After two and a half months, in March 1923, Lenin sent Stalin the following letter:

To Comrade Stalin:

Copies for: Kamenev and Zinoviev.

Dear Comrade Stalin: You permitted

* The "Grigory" referred to in the letter is Zinoviev. Both Kamenev and Zinoviev were executed in the thirties.

yourself a rude summons of my wife to the telephone and a rude reprimand of her. Despite the fact that she told you that she agreed to forget what was said, nevertheless Zinoviev and Kamenev heard about it from her. I have no intention to forget so easily that which is being done against me, and I need not stress here that I consider as directed against me that which is being done against my wife. I ask you, therefore, that you weigh carefully whether you are agreeable to retracting your words and apologising or whether you prefer the severance of relations between us. (Commotion in the hall.)

Sincerely: Lenin March 5, 1923.

Comrades! I will not comment on these documents. They speak eloquently for themselves. Since Stalin could behave in this manner during Lenin's life, could thus behave towards Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, whom the party knows well and values highly as a loyal friend of Lenin and as an active fighter for the cause of the party since its creation—we can easily imagine how Stalin treated other people. These negative characteristics of his developed steadily and during the last years acquired an absolutely insufferable character.*

As later events have proven, Lenin's anxiety was justified: in the first period

* *Stalin's relations with Lenin at that time were far more involved than shown in these letters. Lenin was a very sick man and his wife was looking after him—hence the references to the strain under which she was labouring—but he still occupied himself with the direction of party and State affairs. The letter which Krupskaya had written "in Lenin's words"—to which Stalin took such great exception—was evidently part of Lenin's testament in which Stalin was described as rude and unfit to hold the position of secretary-general of the party. It was dated January 4, 1923.*

This was really the postscript to the original document, which Lenin dictated on December 25, 1922, and in this his doubts about Stalin's suitability for the succession were no stronger—waker, if anything—than his doubts about Trotsky. But between December 25 and January 4 Lenin, who was at that time preoccupied with the nationalist troubles in Georgia, referred in notes he dictated on December 30 to "the hastiness and administrative impulsiveness of Stalin (which) played a fatal role here." (Quoted from Trotsky, "The Real Situation in Russia.") It was this view that may have induced Lenin to write the much sharper postscript.

Then, on January 25, Lenin published in "Pravda" a criticism of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, which was headed by Stalin, and another, much stronger criticism, on March 4. It was the day after this article appeared that Lenin sent to Stalin the note threatening the severance of relations, which is quoted by Khrushchev. Four days later, on March 9, Lenin suffered his third stroke, from which he never recovered.

after Lenin's death Stalin still paid attention to his advice, but later he began to disregard the serious admonitions of Vladimir Ilyich.

When we analyse the practice of Stalin in regard to the direction of the party and of the country, when we pause to consider everything which Stalin perpetrated, we must be convinced that Lenin's fears were justified. The negative characteristics of Stalin, which, in Lenin's time, were only incipient, transformed themselves during the last years into a grave abuse of power by Stalin, which caused untold harm to our party.

We have to consider seriously and analyse correctly this matter in order that we may preclude any possibility of a repetition in any form whatever of what took place during the life of Stalin, who absolutely did not tolerate collegiality in leadership and in work, and who practised brutal violence, not only towards everything which opposed him but also towards that which seemed to his capricious and despotical character contrary to his concepts.

Stalin acted not through persuasion, explanation, and patient co-operation with people, but by imposing his concepts and demanding absolute submission to his opinion. Whoever opposed this concept or tried to prove his viewpoint, and the correctness of his position, was doomed to removal from the leading collective and to subsequent moral and physical annihilation. This was especially true during the period following the seventeenth party Congress, when many prominent party leaders and rank-and-file party workers, honest and dedicated to the cause of Communism, fell victim to Stalin's despotism.

We must affirm that the party had fought a serious fight against the Trotskyites, Rightists, and bourgeois Nationalists, and that it disarmed ideologically all the enemies of Leninism. This ideological fight was carried on successfully as a result of which the party became strengthened and tempered. Here Stalin played a positive rôle.

The party led a great political ideological struggle against those in its own ranks who proposed anti-Leninist theses, who represented a political line hostile to the party and to the cause of Socialism. This was a stubborn and a difficult fight but a necessary one, because the political line of both the Trotskyite-Zinovievite block and of the Bukharinites led actually towards the restoration of capitalism and capitulation to the world bourgeoisie. Let us consider for a moment what would have happened if in 1928-9 the political line of Right deviation had prevailed among

us, or orientation towards "cotton-dress industrialisation," or towards the kulak, &c. We would not now have a powerful heavy industry, we would not have the kolkhozes, we would find ourselves disarmed and weak in a capitalist encirclement.*

It was for this reason that the party led an inexorable ideological fight and explained to all party members and to the non-party masses the harm and the danger of the anti-Leninist proposals of the Trotskyite Opposition and the Rightist opportunists. And this great work of explaining the party line bore fruit; both the Trotskyites and the Rightist opportunists were politically isolated; the overwhelming party majority supported the Leninist line and the party was able to awaken and organise the masses to apply the Leninist party line and to build Socialism.

Worth noting is the fact that even during the progress of the furious ideological fight against the Trotskyites, the Zinovievites, the Bukharinites and others—extreme repressive measures were not used against them: the fight was on ideological grounds. But some years later when Socialism in our country was fundamentally constructed, when the exploiting classes were generally liquidated, when the Soviet social structure had radically changed, when the social basis for political movements and groups hostile to the party had violently contracted, when the ideological opponents of the party were long since defeated politically—then the repression directed against them began.

It was precisely during this period (1935-7-8) that the practice of mass repression through the Government apparatus was born, first against the enemies of Leninism—Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinites, long since politically defeated by the party, and subsequently also against many honest Communists, against those party cadres who had borne the heavy load of the Civil War and the first and most difficult years of industrialisation and collectivisation, who actively fought against the Trotskyites and the Rightists for the Leninist party line.†

* "Cotton-dress industrialisation" was the term used to describe the policy advocated by those who favoured at that time the production of more consumer goods. It was also used by Shepilov, then editor of "Pravda," in his article on January 24, 1955, denouncing those who favoured the development of light industry, which was interpreted as an attack on Malenkov. Less than a fortnight later Malenkov was dismissed from the post of Premier.

† In referring to the period 1935-7-8 Khrushchev makes a distinction between

Stalin originated the concept "enemy of the people." This term automatically rendered it unnecessary that the ideological errors of a man or men engaged in a controversy be proven; this term made possible the usage of the most cruel repression, violating all norms of revolutionary legality, against anyone who in any way disagreed with Stalin, against those who were only suspected of hostile intent, against those who had bad reputations. This concept, "enemy of the people," actually eliminated the possibility of any kind of ideological fight or the making of one's views known on this or that issue, even those of a practical character. In the main, and in actuality, the only proof of guilt used, against all norms of current legal science, was the "confession" of the accused himself; and, as subsequent probing proved, "confessions" were acquired through physical pressures against the accused.

This led to glaring violations of revolutionary legality, and to the fact that many entirely innocent persons, who in the past had defended the party line, became victims. We must assert that in regard to those persons who in their time had opposed the party line, there were often no sufficiently serious reasons for their physical annihilation. The formula "enemy of the people" was specifically introduced for the purpose of physically annihilating such individuals.

It is a fact that many persons who were later annihilated as enemies of the party and people had worked with Lenin during his life. Some of these persons had made errors during Lenin's life, but in spite of this Lenin benefited

the first, comparatively mild, purge, and the second wave of repression, conducted by Yezhov and usually called "Yezhovshchina," which began in 1937 and was far more extensive in scope and severity than the first stage.

In confining his denunciation to this period, and in restricting the sufferers from "mass repression" only to members of the Government and party machine, he makes it clear that previous waves of repression still have his approval. These found their expression in the Shakhty trial of alleged saboteurs in May-July, 1928, the trial of the Industrial party in November-December, 1930, the trial of Mensheviks in March, 1931, and many others.

This, and Khrushchev's earlier reference to the correctness of the party's agricultural policy and its attitude to the kulaks, is tantamount to approval by Khrushchev of the greatest and most vicious wave of mass repression in Soviet history. As Stalin pointed out in November, 1928, (Works, Russian edition, volume 12, page 264), the kulak families constituted 5 per cent of the rural population, that is, some 6,000,000 people. Most of them were later arrested, deported, or shot.

by their work, he corrected them, and he did everything possible to retain them in the ranks of the party; he induced them to follow him.

In this connection the delegates to the party Congress should familiarise themselves with an unpublished note by V. I. Lenin directed to the Central Committee's Political Bureau in October, 1920. Outlining the duties of the Control Commission, Lenin wrote that the commission should be transformed into a real "organ of Party and proletarian conscience."

As a special duty of the Control Commission there is recommended a deep, individualised relationship with, and sometimes even a type of therapy for, the representatives of the so-called Opposition—those who have experienced a psychological crisis because of failure in their Soviet or party career. An effort should be made to quiet them, to explain the matter to them in a way used among comrades, to find for them (avoiding the method of issuing orders) a task for which they are psychologically fitted. Advice and rules relating to this matter are to be formulated by the Central Committee's organisational bureau, etc."

Everyone knows how irreconcilable Lenin was with the ideological enemies of Marxism, with those who deviated from the correct party line. At the same time, however, Lenin, as is evident from the given document, in his practice of directing the party demanded the most intimate party contact with people who had shown indecision or temporary non-conformity with the party line, but whom it was possible to return to the party path. Lenin advised that such people should be patiently educated without the application of extreme methods. Lenin's wisdom in dealing with people was evident in his work with cadres.

An entirely different relationship with people characterised Stalin. Lenin's traits—patient work with people; stubborn and painstaking education of them; the ability to induce people to follow him without using compulsion, but rather through the ideological influence on them of the whole collective—were entirely foreign to Stalin. He discarded the Leninist method of convincing and educating; he abandoned the method of ideological struggle for that of administrative violence, mass repressions, and terror. He acted on an increasingly larger scale and more stubbornly through punitive organs, at the same time often violating all existing norms of morality and of Soviet laws.

Arbitrary behaviour by one person encouraged and permitted arbitrariness in others. Mass arrests and deportations of many thousands of people, execution without trial and without normal investigation created conditions

of insecurity, fear, and even desperation. This, of course, did not contribute towards unity of the party ranks and of all strata of working people, but on the contrary brought about annihilation and the expulsion from the party of workers who were loyal but inconvenient to Stalin.

Our party fought for the implementation of Lenin's plans for the construction of socialism. This was an ideological fight. Had Leninist principles been observed during the course of this fight, had the party's devotion to principles been skilfully combined with a keen and solicitous concern for people, had they not been repelled and wasted but rather drawn to our side—we certainly would not have had such a brutal violation of revolutionary legality and many thousands of people would not have fallen victim of the method of terror. Extraordinary methods would then have been resorted to only against those people who had in fact committed criminal acts against the Soviet system.

Let us recall some historical facts.

In the days before the October Revolution two members of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party—Kamenev and Zinoviev—declared themselves against Lenin's plan for an armed uprising. In addition, on October 18 they published in the Menshevik newspaper "Novaya Zhizn" a statement declaring that the Bolsheviks were making preparations for an uprising and that they considered it adventurist. Kamenev and Zinoviev thus disclosed to the enemy the decision of the Central Committee to stage the uprising and that the uprising had been organised to take place within the very near future.*

This was treason against the party and against the Revolution. In this connection V. I. Lenin wrote: "Kamenev and Zinoviev revealed the decision of the Central Committee of their party on the armed uprising to Rodzyanko and Kerensky . . ." He put before the Central Committee the question of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's expulsion from the party.

However, after the great Socialist

October Revolution, as is known, Zinoviev and Kamenev were given leading positions. Lenin put them in positions in which they carried out most responsible party tasks and participated actively in the work of the leading party and Soviet organs. It is known that Zinoviev and Kamenev committed a number of other serious errors during Lenin's life. In his "testament" Lenin warned that "Zinoviev's and Kamenev's October episode was of course not an accident." But Lenin did not pose the question of their arrest and certainly not their shooting.

Or let us take the example of the Trotskyites. At present, after a sufficiently long historical period, we can speak about the fight with the Trotskyites with complete calm and can analyse this matter with sufficient objectivity. After all, around Trotsky were people whose origin cannot by any means be traced to bourgeois society. Part of them belonged to the party intelligentsia and a certain part were recruited from among the workers. We can name many individuals who in their time joined the Trotskyites; however, these same individuals took an active part in the workers' movement before the Revolution, during the Socialist October Revolution itself, and also in the consolidation of the victory of this greatest of revolutions. Many of them broke with Trotskyism and returned to Leninist positions. Was it necessary to annihilate such people? We are deeply convinced that had Lenin lived such an extreme method would not have been used against many of them.

Such are only a few historical facts. But can it be said that Lenin did not decide to use even the most severe means against enemies of the Revolution when this was actually necessary? No, no one can say this. Vladimir Ilyich demanded uncompromising dealings with the enemies of the Revolution and of the working class and when necessary resorted ruthlessly to such methods. You will recall only V. I. Lenin's fight with the Socialist revolutionary organisers of the anti-Soviet uprising, with the counter-revolutionary kulaks in 1918 and with others, when Lenin without hesitation used the most extreme methods against the enemies. Lenin used such methods, however, only against actual class enemies and not against those who blunder, who err, and whom it was possible to lead through ideological influence, and even retain in the leadership.

Lenin used severe methods only in the most necessary cases, when the exploiting classes were still in existence and were vigorously opposing the

* Kamenev and Zinoviev did no more in this article than to put into print something that was generally known. But Khrushchev appears to be deliberately misleading in describing "Novaya Zhizn" as a Menshevik newspaper. The paper was in fact edited by Maxim Gorki and published by a group of social democratic internationalists—old Bolsheviks who had become disillusioned with Lenin's policy. Now that the cult of Lenin has replaced that of Stalin, Khrushchev has phrased his reference to the paper in such a way as to keep out any reminder that Gorki—who is still widely respected—was ever opposed to Lenin.

Revolution, when the struggle for survival was decidedly assuming the sharpest forms, even including a Civil War.

Stalin, on the other hand, used extreme methods and mass repressions at a time when the Revolution was already victorious, when the Soviet State was strengthened, when the exploiting classes were already liquidated and Socialist relations were rooted solidly in all phases of national economy, when our Party was politically consolidated and had strengthened itself both numerically and ideologically. It is clear that here Stalin showed in a whole series of cases his intolerance, his brutality, and his abuse of power. Instead of proving his political correctness and mobilising the masses, he often chose the path of repression and physical annihilation, not only against actual enemies but also against individuals who had not committed any crimes against the party and the Soviet Government. Here we see no wisdom but only a demonstration of the brutal force which had once so alarmed V. I. Lenin.

Lately, especially after the unmasking of the Beria gang, the Central Committee looked into a series of matters fabricated by this gang. This revealed a very ugly picture of brutal wilfulness connected with the incorrect behaviour of Stalin. As facts prove, Stalin, using his unlimited power, allowed himself many abuses, acting in the name of the Central Committee, not asking for the opinion of the committee members nor even of the members of the Central Committee's Political Bureau; often he did not inform them about his personal decisions concerning very important party and Government matters.

Considering the question of the cult of an individual we must first of all show everyone what harm this caused to the interests of our party.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin had always stressed the party's rôle and significance in the direction of the Socialist Government of workers and peasants; he saw in this the chief precondition for a successful building of socialism in our country. Pointing to the great responsibility of the Bolshevik party, as a ruling party in the Soviet State, Lenin called for the most meticulous observance of all norms of party life; he called for the realisation of the principles of collegiality in the direction of the party and the State.

Collegiality of leadership flows from the very nature of our party, a party built on the principles of Democratic centralism.

"This means," said Lenin, "that all party matters are accomplished by all party members—directly or through repre-

sentatives—who without any exceptions are subject to the same rules; in addition, all administrative members, all directing collegia, all holders of party positions are elective, they must account for their activities and are recallable."

It is known that Lenin himself offered an example of the most careful observance of these principles. There was no matter so important that Lenin himself decided it without asking for advice and approval of the majority of the Central Committee members or of the members of the Central Committee's Political Bureau.

In the most difficult period for our party and our country, Lenin considered it necessary regularly to convene congresses, party conferences, and plenary sessions of the Central Committee at which all the most important questions were discussed and where resolutions, carefully worked out by the collective of leaders, were approved.

We can recall, for an example, the year 1918 when the country was threatened by the attack of the imperialistic interventionists. In this situation the seventh party congress was convened in order to discuss a vitally important matter which could not be postponed—the matter of peace. In 1919, while the civil war was raging, the eighth party congress convened, which adopted a new party programme, decided such important matters as the relationship with the peasant masses, the organisation of the Red Army, the leading rôle of the party in the work of the soviets, the correction of the social composition of the party, and other matters. In 1920 the ninth party congress was convened which laid down guiding principles pertaining to the party's work in the sphere of economic construction. In 1921 the tenth party congress accepted Lenin's new economic policy and the historical resolution called "About Party Unity."

During Lenin's life party congresses were convened regularly; always, when a radical turn in the development of the party and the country took place, Lenin considered it absolutely necessary that the party discuss at length all the basic matters pertaining to internal and foreign policy and to questions bearing on the development of party and Government.

It is very characteristic that Lenin addressed to the party Congress as the highest party organ his last articles, letters, and remarks. During the period between congresses the Central Committee of the party, acting as the most authoritative leading collective, meticulously observed the principles of the party and carried out its policy.

So it was during Lenin's life.

Were our party's sacred Leninist

principles observed after the death of Vladimir Ilyich?

Whereas during the first few years after Lenin's death party congresses and Central Committee plenums took place more or less regularly, later, when Stalin began increasingly to abuse his power, these principles were brutally violated. This was especially evident during the last fifteen years of his life. Was it a normal situation when our thirteen years elapsed between the eighteenth and nineteenth party congresses, years during which our party and our country had experienced so many important events? These events demanded categorically that the party should have passed resolutions pertaining to the country's defence during the patriotic war and to peacetime construction after the war. Even after the end of the war a congress was not convened for over seven years.

Central Committee plenums were hardly ever called. It should be sufficient to mention that during all the years of the patriotic war not a single Central Committee plenum took place. It is true that there was an attempt to call a Central Committee plenum in October, 1941, when Central Committee members from the whole country were called to Moscow. They waited two days for the opening of the plenum, but in vain. Stalin did not even want to meet and to talk to the Central Committee members. This fact shows how demoralised Stalin was in the first months of the war and how haughtily and disdainfully he treated the Central Committee members. In practice Stalin ignored the norms of party life and trampled on the Leninist principle of collective party leadership.

Stalin's wilfulness vis-a-vis the party and its Central Committee became fully evident after the seventeenth party congress, which took place in 1934.

Having at its disposal numerous data showing brutal wilfulness towards party cadres, the Central Committee has created a party commission under the control of the Central Committee Presidium; it was charged with investigating what made possible the mass repressions against the majority of the Central Committee members and candidates elected at the seventeenth congress of the All-Union Communist party (Bolsheviks).

The commission has become acquainted with a large quantity of material in the N.K.V.D. archives and with other documents and has established many facts pertaining to the fabrication of cases against Communists, to false accusations, to glaring abuses of Socialist legality—which resulted in the death of innocent people. It became apparent that many party, Soviet, and

economic activists, who were branded in 1937-8 as "enemies," were actually never enemies, spies, wreckers, etc., but were always honest Communists; they were only so stigmatised and often, no longer able to bear barbaric tortures, they charged themselves—at the order of the investigative judges, falsifiers—with all kinds of grave and unlikely crimes. The commission has presented to the Central Committee Presidium lengthy and documented materials pertaining to mass repressions against the delegates to the seventeenth party congress and against members of the Central Committee elected at that congress. These materials have been studied by the Presidium of the Central Committee.

It was determined that of the 139 members and candidates of the party's Central Committee who were elected at the seventeenth congress, 98 persons, i.e. 70 per cent were arrested and shot (mostly in 1937-8). (Indignation in the hall.)

What was the composition of the delegates to the 17th Congress? It is known that 80 per cent. of the voting participants of the 17th Congress joined the party during the years of conspiracy before the Revolution and during the Civil War; this means before 1921. By social origin the basic mass of the delegates to the Congress were workers (60 per cent. of the voting members).

For this reason, it was inconceivable that a Congress so composed would have elected a Central Committee, a majority of whom would prove to be enemies of the party. The only reason why 70 per cent. of the Central Committee members and candidates elected at the 17th Congress were branded as enemies of the party and of the people was because honest Communists were slandered, accusations against them were fabricated, and revolutionary legality was gravely undermined.

The same fate met not only the Central Committee members but also the majority of the delegates to the 17th party Congress. Of 1,966 delegates with either voting or advisory rights, 1,108 persons were arrested on charges of anti-revolutionary crimes, i.e., decidedly more than a majority. This very fact shows how absurd, wild, and contrary to common sense were the charges of counter-revolutionary crimes made out, as we now see, against a majority of participants at the 17th party Congress. (Indignation in the hall.)

We should recall that the 17th party Congress is historically known as the Congress of Victors. Delegates to the Congress were active participants in the building of our Socialist State; many of them suffered and fought for party interests during the pre-revolutionary

years in the conspiracy and at the Civil War fronts; they fought their enemies valiantly, and often fearlessly looked into the face of death. How then can we believe that such people could prove to be "two-faced" and had joined the camps of the enemies of Socialism during the era after the political liquidation of Zinovievites, Trotskyites, and Rightists and after the great accomplishments of Socialist construction?

This was the result of the abuse of power by Stalin, who began to use mass terror against the party cadres.

What is the reason that mass repression against activists increased more and more after the seventeenth party Congress? It was because at that time Stalin had so elevated himself above the party and above the nation that he ceased to consider either the Central Committee or the party. While he still reckoned with the opinion of the collective before the eighteenth Congress, after the complete political liquidation of the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, and Bukharinites, when as a result of that fight and Socialist victories the party achieved unity, Stalin ceased to an ever greater degree to consider the members of the party's Central Committee and even the members of the Political Bureau. Stalin thought that now he could decide all things alone and all he needed were statisticians; he treated all others in such a way that they could only listen and praise him.

After the criminal murder of S. M. Kirov, mass repression and brutal acts of violation of Socialist legality began. On the evening of December 1, 1934, on Stalin's initiative (without the approval of the Political Bureau—which was given two days later, casually) the Secretary of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, Enukidze, signed the following directive:

"1. Investigative agencies are directed to speed up the cases of those accused of the preparation of execution of acts of terror.

"2. Judicial organs are directed not to hold up the execution of death sentences pertaining to crimes of this category in order to consider the possibility of pardon, because the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. does not consider as possible the receiving of petitions of this sort.

"3. The organs of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs is directed to execute the death sentences against criminals of the above-mentioned category immediately after the passage of sentences."

This directive became the basis for mass acts of abuse against Socialist legality. During many of the fabricated court cases the accused were charged with the "preparation" of terroristic acts; this deprived them of any possibility that their cases might be

re-examined, even when they stated before the court that their "confessions" were secured by force; and when, in a convincing manner, they disproved the accusations against them.*

It must be asserted that to this day the circumstances surrounding Kirov's

*Khrushchev here seems to hold it against Enukidze that he signed this savage law, under which those accused of "acts of terror" were summarily tried and shot, without any chance of having their sentences reviewed. Enukidze himself was executed later, in December, 1937, under the very law which he had signed. Enukidze fell from grace in the first half of 1935, and at that time, too, Khrushchev, had something against him—only then it was Enukidze's insufficient vigilance against the class. Khrushchev's speech to the Moscow party "aktiv" was reported in "Pravda" on June 13, 1935, as follows:

"The aktiv listened with special attention to the second part of the report which dealt with the official apparatus of the Secretariat of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. and with Enukidze. A few months ago in this same hall of the conservatoire, the sad news of the murder of Sergei Mironovich Kirov struck the Moscow aktiv like a thunderbolt. The shot which struck Comrade Kirov showed that our enemies stop at nothing. Exposed and maddened, they resort to any kind of foul deed, from setting fire to kolkhoz sheepfolds, poisoning food in workers' canteens to murder of the leaders of the people. All the necessary deductions should have been drawn from this signal. Enukidze, however, having lost all the qualities of a Bolshevik, preferred to be a 'kind uncle' to the enemies of our party.

"Comrade Khrushchev spoke about the contamination of the official apparatus of the Secretariat of the Central Executive Committee, and about the political and moral degeneration of Enukidze, who had allowed the sworn enemies of the working class to penetrate into it.

"The party showed great trust in Enukidze, giving him responsible work to do," said Comrade Khrushchev, "but he did not justify that trust. He betrayed the cause of the revolution. He degenerated politically and morally. Even in the plenum of the Central Committee of the party he spoke not like a Communist but like a bad business manager, a petty bourgeois, a degenerate. His expulsion from the ranks of the party proves once again that the Bolsheviks show no mercy to anyone who flouts the responsibilities of a Communist.

"To thunderous applause from the whole hall, Comrade Khrushchev appealed for still greater vigilance, for a fight against rotten liberalism, for a still greater closing of the ranks of the Moscow Bolsheviks around the Central Committee and the leader of the party, Comrade Stalin."

There is here the customary tribute to Stalin, which no public speaker could afford at that time to omit from his address. But is there not here also some evidence of the "political and moral degeneration" in Khrushchev which Khrushchev attributes to Enukidze?

murder hide many things which are inexplicable and mysterious and demand a most careful examination. There are reasons for the suspicion that the killer of Kirov, Nikolayev, was assisted by someone from among the people whose duty it was to protect the person of Kirov. A month and a half before the killing, Nikolayev was arrested on the grounds of suspicious behaviour, but he was released and not even searched. It is an unusually suspicious circumstance that when the Chekist assigned to protect Kirov was being brought for an interrogation, on December 2, 1934, he was killed in a car "accident" in which no other occupants of the car were harmed. After the murder of Kirov, top functionaries of the Leningrad N.K.V.D. were given very light sentences, but in 1937 they were shot. We can assume that they were shot in order to cover the traces of the organisers of Kirov's killing.* (Movement in the hall.)

Mass repression grew tremendously from the end of 1936 after a telegram from Stalin and Zhdanov, dated from Sochi on September 25, 1936, was addressed to Kaganovich, Molotov, and other members of the Political Bureau. The content of the telegram was as follows:—

"We deem it absolutely necessary and urgent that Comrade Yezhov be nominated to the post of People's Commissar for Internal Affairs. Yagoda has definitely proved himself to be incapable of unmasking the Trotskyite-Zinovievite block. The O.G.P.U. is four years behind in this matter. This is noted by all party workers and by the majority of the representatives of the N.K.V.D.

Strictly speaking we should stress that Stalin did not meet with and therefore could not know the opinion of party workers.

This Stalinist formulation that the "N.K.V.D.† is four years behind" in applying mass repression and that there is a necessity for "catching up" with the neglected work directly, pushed the N.K.V.D. workers in the path of mass arrests and executions.

We should state that this formulation

* Detailed "evidence" on this aspect of the Kirov murder was given during the trial of Bukharin, Yagoda and others, in March, 1938, when the car "accident" was also mentioned. Khrushchev still seems to rely on this evidence, the head of the N.K.V.D., and leaves open the possibility that Stalin may have arranged the murder of Kirov to use it as a pretext for the mass terror.

† The terms O.G.P.U. and N.K.V.D. are here used interchangeably. Like the Cheka and the M.V.D., they were the police organisations which carried out the "mass terror" at various periods of the Soviet regime. Cheka, the Extraordinary Commission to Fight Counter-revolution, was

was also forced on the February-March plenary session of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1937. The plenary session approved it on the basis of Yezhov's report, "Lessons Flowing from the Harmful Activity, Diversjon, and Espionage of the Japanese-German-Trotskyite Agents," stating:

The plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) considers that all facts revealed during the investigation into the matter of an anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre and of its followers in the provinces show that the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs has fallen behind at least four years in the attempt to unmask these most inexorable enemies of the people."

The mass repressions at this time were made under the slogan of a fight against the Trotskyites. Did the Trotskyites at this time actually constitute such a danger to our party and to the Soviet State? We should recall that in 1927 on the eve of the fifteenth party Congress only some 4,000 votes were cast for the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Opposition, while there were 724,000 for the party line. During the ten years which passed between the fifteenth party Congress and the February-March Central Committee plenum Trotskyism was completely disarmed; many former Trotskyites had changed their former views and worked in the various sectors building socialism. It is clear that in the situation of Socialist victory there was no basis for mass terror in the country.

Stalin's report at the February-March Central Committee plenum in 1937, "Deficiencies of Party Work and Methods for the Liquidation of the Trotskyites and of other Two-facers," contained an attempt at theoretical justification of the mass terror policy under the pretext that as we march forward towards socialism class war must allegedly sharpen. Stalin asserted that both history and Lenin taught him this.

Actually Lenin taught that the application of revolutionary violence is necessitated by the resistance of the exploiting classes, and this referred to the era when the exploiting classes existed and were powerful. As soon as the nation's political situation had improved, when in January, 1920, the Red Army took Rostov and thus won a most important victory over Denikin,

established in 1917; in 1922 it was replaced by the O.G.P.U., which in turn was replaced by the N.K.V.D.—the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs—in 1934. This was renamed Ministry of Internal Affairs—M.V.D.—in 1946, when the Council of Commissars became the Council of Ministers.

Lenin instructed Dzerzhinsky to stop mass terror and to abolish the death penalty. Lenin justified this important political move of the Soviet State in the following manner in his report at the session of the All-Union Central Executive Committee on February 2, 1920:

"We were forced to use terror because of the terror practised by the Entente, when strong World Powers threw their hordes against us, not avoiding any type of conduct. We would not have lasted two days had we not answered these attempts of officers and White Guardists in a merciless fashion. This meant the use of terror, but this was forced upon us by the terrorist methods of the Entente.

"But as soon as we attained a decisive victory, even before the end of the war, immediately after taking Rostov, we gave up the use of the death penalty and thus proved that we intend to execute our own programme in the manner that we promised. We say that the application of violence flows out of the decision to smother the exploiters, the big landowners, and the capitalists; as soon as this was accomplished we gave up the use of all extraordinary methods. We have proved this in practice."

Stalin deviated from these clear and plain precepts of Lenin. Stalin put the party and N.K.V.D. up to the use of mass terror when the exploiting classes had been liquidated in our country and when there were no serious reasons for the use of extraordinary mass terror.

This terror was actually directed not at the remnants of the defeated exploiting classes but against the honest workers of the party and of the Soviet State; against them were made lying, slanderous, and absurd accusations concerning "two-facedness," "espionage," "sabotage," preparation of fictitious "plots," &c.

At the February-March Central Committee plenum in 1937 many members actually questioned the rightness of the established course regarding mass repressions under the pretext of combating "two-facedness." Comrade Postyshev* most ably expressed these doubts. He said:

"I have philosophised that the severe years of fighting have passed; party members who have lost their backbones have broken down or have joined the camp of the enemy; healthy elements

** Postyshev, who was later executed, was the second secretary of the Ukrainian party and a candidate member of the Moscow Politburo. At the Thirteenth Congress of the Ukrainian Communist party, in May, 1937, he was accused of having created "an atmosphere of servility" around himself and of having joined a group of Trotskyites, nationalists, and Bukharinites. An announcement in January, 1938, stated that he was no longer a candidate member of the Politburo. No more was heard of him after that.*

have fought for the party. These were the years of industrialisation and collectivisation. I never thought it possible that after this severe era had passed Karpov and people like him would find themselves in the camp of the enemy. (Karpov was a worker in the Ukrainian Central Committee whom Postyshev knew well.) And now, according to the testimony, it appears that Karpov was recruited in 1934 by the Trotskyites.

"I personally do not believe that in 1934 an honest party member who had trod the long road of unrelenting fight against enemies for the party and for socialism would now be in the camp of the enemies. I do not believe it. . . . I cannot imagine how it would be possible to travel with the party during the difficult years and then, in 1934, join the Trotskyites. It is an odd thing. . . ." (Movement in the hall.)

Using Stalin's formulation, namely, that the closer we are to socialism the more enemies we will have, and using the resolution of the February-March Central Committee plenum passed on the basis of Yezhov's report—the provocateurs who had infiltrated the State security organs together with conscienceless careerists began to cover up with the party's name the mass terror against party cadres, cadres of the Soviet State and the ordinary Soviet citizens. It should suffice to say that the number of arrests based on charges of counter-revolutionary crimes had grown ten times between 1936 and 1937.

It is known that brutal wilfulness was practised against leading party workers. The party Statute, approved at the seventeenth party Congress, was based on Leninist principles expressed at the tenth party Congress. It stated that in order to apply the extreme method such as exclusion from the party against a Central Committee member, against a Central Committee candidate, and against a member of the party Control Commission, "it is necessary to call a Central Committee plenum and to invite to the plenum all Central Committee candidate members and all members of the party Control Commission"; only if two-thirds of the members of such a general assembly of responsible party leaders find it necessary, only then can a Central Committee member or candidate be expelled.

The majority of the Central Committee members and candidates elected at the seventeenth Congress and arrested in 1937-8 were expelled from the party illegally through the brutal abuse of the party statute, because the question of their expulsion was never studied at the Central Committee plenum.

Now when the cases of some of these so-called "spies" and "saboteurs" were examined it was found that all their cases were fabricated. Confessions of guilt of many arrested and charged with enemy activity were

gained with the help of cruel and inhuman tortures.

At the same time Stalin, as we have been informed by members of the Political Bureau of that time, did not show them the statements of many accused political activists when they retracted their confessions before the military tribunal and asked for an objective examination of their cases. There were many such declarations, and Stalin knew of them.

The Central Committee considers it absolutely necessary to inform Congress of many such fabricated "cases" against the members of the party's Central Committee elected at the seventeenth party Congress.

An example of vile provocation, of odious falsification, and of criminal violation of revolutionary legality is the case of the former candidate for the Central Committee Political Bureau, one of the most eminent workers of the party and of the Soviet Government, Comrade Eikhe, who was a party member since 1905.

Comrade Eikhe was arrested on April 29, 1938, on the basis of slanderous material, without the sanction of the Prosecutor of the U.S.S.R., which was finally received fifteen months after the arrest. Investigation of Eikhe's case was made in a manner which most brutally violated Soviet legality and was accompanied by wilfulness and falsification. Eikhe was forced under torture to sign ahead of time a protocol of his confessions prepared by the investigative judges, accused of anti-Soviet activity.

On October 1, 1939, Eikhe sent his declaration to Stalin in which he categorically denied his guilt and asked for an examination of his case. In the declaration he wrote: "There is no more bitter misery than to sit in the gaol of a Government for which I have always fought."

A second declaration by Eikhe has been preserved which he sent to Stalin on October 27, 1939. In it he cited facts very convincingly and countered the slanderous accusations made against him, arguing that this provocative accusation was on the one hand the work of real Trotskyites whose arrests he had sanctioned as First Secretary of the West Siberian Krai party committee and who conspired in order to take revenge on him, and, on the other hand, the result of the base falsification of material by the investigative judges. Eikhe wrote in his declaration:

"... on October 25 of this year I was informed that the investigation in my case has been concluded and I was given access to the material of this investigation. Had I been guilty of only one-hundredth of the crimes with which I am charged, I would not have dared to send

you this pre-execution declaration; however, I have not been guilty of even one of the things with which I am charged and my heart is clean of even the shadow of baseness. I have never in my life told you a word of falsehood and now, finding my two feet in the grave, I am also not lying. My whole case is a typical example of provocation, slander, and violation of the elementary basis of revolutionary legality...

"... The confessions which were made part of my file are not only absurd but contain some slander towards the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and towards the Council of People's Commissars because correct resolutions of the Central Committee and of the Council of People's Commissars which were not made on my initiative and without my participation are presented as hostile acts of counter-revolutionary organisations made at my suggestion...

"I am now alluding to the most disgraceful part of my life and to my really grave guilt against the party and against you. This is my confession of counter-revolutionary activity... The case is as follows: not being able to suffer the tortures to which I was submitted by Ushakov and Nikolayev—and especially by the first one—who utilised the knowledge that my broken ribs have not properly mended and have caused me great pain—I have been forced to accuse myself and others.

"The majority of my confession has been suggested or dictated by Ushakov, and the remainder is my reconstruction of N.K.V.D. material from Western Siberia for which I assumed all responsibility. If some part of the story which Ushakov fabricated and which I signed did not properly hang together, I was forced to sign a variation. The same thing was done to Rukhimovich, who was at first designated as a member of the reserve net and whose name later was removed without telling me anything about it; the same was also done with the leader of the reserve net, supposedly created by Bukharin in 1935. At first I wrote my name in, and then I was instructed to insert Mezhlauk. There were other similar incidents.

"... I am asking and begging you that you again examine my case and this not for the purpose of sparing me but in order to unmask the vile provocation which like a snake wound itself around many persons in a great degree due to my meanness and criminal slander. I have never betrayed you or the party. I know that I perish because of vile and mean work of the enemies of the party and of the people, who fabricated the provocation against me."

* Eikhe, who joined the party in Latvia in 1905, came to Soviet Russia in 1918 and thereafter occupied a number of leading party posts in Siberia. Rukhimovich, a deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy in the twenties, occupied various ministerial posts before he disappeared in 1938. Mezhlauk was the chairman of the State Planning Commission before he was purged. The "reserve net" to which Eikhe refers was a supposed

It would appear that such an important declaration was worth an examination by the Central Committee. This, however, was not done and the declaration was transmitted to Beria while the terrible maltreatment of the Political Bureau candidate, comrade Eikhe, continued. On February 2, 1940, Eikhe was brought before the court. Here he did not confess any guilt and said as follows:

"In all the so-called confessions of mine there is not one letter written by me with the exception of my signatures under the protocols which were forced from me. I have made my confession under pressure from the investigative judge who from the time of my arrest tormented me. After that I began to write all this nonsense . . . the most important thing for me is to tell the court, the party, and Stalin that I am not guilty. I have never been guilty of any conspiracy. I will die believing in the truth of party policy as I have believed in it during my whole life."

On February 4 Eikhe was shot. (Indignation in the hall.) It has been definitely established now that Eikhe's case was fabricated; he has been posthumously rehabilitated.

Comrade Rudzutak, candidate member of the Political Bureau, member of the party since 1905, who spent ten years in a Tsarist hard labour camp, completely retracted in court the confession which was forced from him.* The protocol of the session of the Collegium of the Supreme Military Court contains the following statement by Rudzutak:

"... The only plea which he places before the court is that the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) be informed that there is in the N.K.V.D. an as yet liquidated centre which is craftily manufacturing cases, which forces innocent persons to confess; there is no opportunity to prove one's non-participation in crimes to which the confessions of various persons testify. The investigative methods are such that they force people to lie and to slander entirely innocent persons in addition to those who already stand accused. He asks the court that he be allowed to inform the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) about all this in writing. He assures the court that he personally had never any evil designs in regard to the policy of our Party because he had always agreed with the Party policy pertaining to all spheres of economic and cultural activity."

conspiratorial organisation which was to take over if and when the first anti-Stalin conspiracy was discovered by the police.

*Rudzutak, who in the early twenties was very close to Lenin and who was later instrumental in "Stalinising" the trade unions, fell gradually from favour in the thirties and disappeared early in 1938.

This declaration of Rudzutak was ignored, despite the fact that Rudzutak was in his time the Chief of the Central Control Commission which was called into being in accordance with Lenin's concept for the purpose of fighting for party unity. . . In this manner fell the Chief of this highly authoritative party organ, a victim of brutal wilfulness; he was not even called before the Central Committee's Political Bureau because Stalin did not want to talk to him. Sentence was pronounced on him in 20 minutes and he was shot. (Indignation in the hall.)

After careful examination of the case in 1955 it was established that the accusation against Rudzutak was false and that it was based on slanderous material. Rudzutak has been rehabilitated posthumously.

The way in which the former N.K.V.D. workers manufactured various fictitious "anti-Soviet centres" and "blocs" with the help of provocative methods is seen from the confession of Comrade Rozenblum, party member since 1906, who was arrested in 1937 by the Leningrad N.K.V.D.

During the examination in 1955 of the Komarov case Rozenblum revealed the following fact: When Rozenblum was arrested in 1937 he was subjected to terrible torture during which he was ordered to confess false information concerning himself and other persons. He was then brought to the office of Zakovsky, who offered him freedom on condition that he make before the court a false confession fabricated in 1937 by the N.K.V.D. concerning "sabotage, espionage, and diversion in a terroristic centre in Leningrad." (Movement in the hall). With unbelievable cynicism Zakovsky told him about the vile "mechanism" for the crafty creation of fabricated "anti-Soviet plots."

"In order to illustrate it to me," Rozenblum stated, "Zakovsky gave me several possible variants of the organisation of this centre and of its branches. After he detailed the organisation to me Zakovsky told me that the N.K.V.D. would prepare the case of this centre, remarking that the trial would be public."

"Before the court were to be brought four or five members of this centre—Chudov, Ugarov, Smorodin, PozernShaposhnikova (Chudov's wife), and others together with two or three members from the branches of this centre. . . ."

"... The case of the Leningrad centre has to be built solidly and for this reason witnesses are needed. Social origin (of course, in the past) and the party standing of the witness will play more than a small rôle."

"You, yourself," said Kakovsky, "will not need to invent anything. The N.K.V.D. will prepare for you a ready outline for every branch of the centre; you will have to study it carefully and to remember well all questions and answers which the court

might ask. This case will be ready in four to five months, or perhaps a half year. During all this time you will be preparing yourself so that you will not compromise the investigation and yourself. Your future will depend on how the trial goes and on its results. If you begin to lie and to testify falsely, blame yourself. If you manage to endure it, you will save your head and we will feed and clothe you at the Government's cost until your death."

This is the kind of vile thing which was then practised. (Movement in the hall.)

Even more widely was the falsification of cases practised in the provinces. The N.K.V.D. headquarters of the Sverdlov Oblast "discovered" the so-called "Ural Uprising Staff"—an organ of the block of Rightists, Trotskyites, Socialist revolutionaries, church leaders—whose chief supposedly was the Secretary of the Sverdlov Oblast Party Committee and members of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Kabakov, who had been a party member since 1914. The investigative material of that time shows that in almost all Krai, Oblasts, and Republics there supposedly existed "Rightist Trotskyite, espionage-terror, and diversionary-sabotage organisations and centres" and that the heads of such organisations as a rule—for no obvious reason—were first secretaries of Oblast or Republic Communist Party Committees or Central Committees. (Movement in the hall.)

Many thousands of honest and innocent Communists have died as a result of this monstrous falsification of such "cases," as a result of the fact that all kinds of slanderous "confessions" were accepted and as a result of the practices of forcing accusations against oneself and others. In the same manner were fabricated the "cases" against eminent party and State workers—Kossior, Chubar, Postyshev, Kosaryev, and others.*

In those years repression on a mass scale was applied which was based on nothing tangible and which resulted in heavy cadre losses to the Party. The vicious practice was condoned of having the N.K.V.D. prepare lists of persons whose cases were under the jurisdiction of the military Collegium and whose sentences were prepared in advance. Yezhov would send these lists to Stalin

*Kossior, a full member of the Politburo and the first party secretary in the Ukraine, lost his post in a purge carried out by Khrushchev, who was in turn appointed Ukrainian party secretary. Chubar, who occupied a number of party and Ministerial posts, first in the Ukraine and then in Moscow, disappeared in 1938. Kosaryev, the secretary of the Komsomol, was accused in 1938 of sabotaging the youth organisation's activities and disappeared.

personally for his approval of the proposed punishment. In 1937-8, 383 such lists containing the names of many thousands of Party, Soviet, Komsomol, Army, and economic workers were sent to Stalin. He approved these lists.

A large part of these cases is being reviewed now and a great number of them are being voided because they are baseless and falsified. Suffice it to say that from 1954 to the present time the military Collegium of the Supreme Court has rehabilitated 7,679 persons, many of them posthumously.*

Mass arrests of party, Soviet, economic, and military workers caused tremendous harm to our country and to the cause of Socialist advancement. Mass repression had a negative influence on the moral-political conditions of the party, created a situation of uncertainty, contributed to the spreading of unhealthy suspicion, and sowed distrust among Communists. All sorts of slanderers and careerists were active.

Resolutions of the January plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), in 1938 had brought some measure of improvement to the party organisation. However, widespread repression also existed in 1938.†

Only because our party possesses such great moral-political strength was it possible for it to survive the difficult events in 1937-8 and to educate new cadres. There is, however, no doubt that our march forward towards socialism

* The cases of all those accused of treason are tried under Soviet law in military courts, and hence, presumably, it is the military courts that now handle the rehabilitation.

† In January, 1938, the central committee, having decided that the purge had gone far enough, ordered the ending of mass expulsions from the party and the rehabilitation of those who had been unjustly accused. That period provides a curious parallel with the present, and the press was full of accusations against "the hateful enemies of the people (who) succeeded in excluding from the party quite a few Communists" ("Partiynoye Stroitelstvo," No. 6, 1938). The blame for the excesses of the past was thus laid at the door not of the party leadership but of the enemies who had penetrated into it. The following involved story, taken from the same source, reflects accurately the atmosphere of the period.

A factory worker, the paper said, had been expelled for suggesting during the purge that the director of his factory ought to be watched. Later, the director was exposed as an enemy of the people, but the worker was not reinstated. He was accused of having been the director's accomplice, because he had incited his fellow-workers to revolt by reading to them a story, out of a Soviet paper, entitled "The Revolt of the Elephants in India."

and towards the preparation of the country's defence would have been much more successful were it not for the tremendous loss in the cadres suffered as a result of the baseless and false mass repressions in 1937-8.

We are justly accusing Yezhov for the degenerate practices of 1937. But we have to answer these questions: Could Yezhov have arrested Kossior, for instance, without the knowledge of Stalin? Was there an exchange of opinions or a Political Bureau decision concerning this? No, there was not, as there was none regarding other cases of this type. Could Yezhov have decided such important matters as the fate of such eminent party figures? No, it would be a display of naïveté to consider this the work of Yezhov alone. It is clear that these matters were decided by Stalin, and that without his orders and his sanction Yezhov could not have done this.

We have examined the cases of, and have rehabilitated, Kossior, Rudzutak, Postyshev, Kosaryev, and others. For what causes were they arrested and sentenced? The review of evidence shows that there was no reason for this. They, like many others, were arrested without the prosecutor's knowledge. In such a situation there is no need for any sanction, for what sort of a sanction could there be when Stalin decided everything. He was the chief prosecutor in these cases. Stalin not only agreed to, but on his own initiative issued arrest orders. We must say this so that the delegates to the Congress can clearly undertake and themselves assess this and draw the proper conclusions.

Facts prove that many abuses were made on Stalin's orders without reckoning with any norms of party and Soviet legality. Stalin was a very distrustful man, diseased with suspicion; we knew this from our work with him. He could look at a man and say: "Why are your eyes so shifty to-day?" or "Why are you turning so much to-day and avoiding to look me directly in the eyes?" The sickly suspicion created in him a general distrust even towards eminent party workers whom he had known for years. Everywhere and in everything he saw "enemies," "two-facers," and "spies."

Possessing unlimited power he indulged in great wilfulness and choked a person morally and physically. A situation was created where one could not express one's own will.

When Stalin said that one or another should be arrested, it was necessary to accept on faith that he was an "enemy of the people." Meanwhile, Beria's gang, which ran the organs of State Security, outdid itself in proving the guilt of the arrested and the "truth" of materials which it falsified. And what proofs were offered? The confessions of the arrested

and the investigative judges accepted these "confessions." And how is it possible that a person confesses to crimes which he has not committed? Only in one way—because of application of physical methods of pressuring him, tortures, bringing him to a state of unconsciousness, deprivation of his judgment, taking away his human dignity. In this manner were "confessions" acquired.

When the wave of mass arrests began to recede in 1939, and the leaders of territorial party organisations began to accuse the N.K.V.D. workers of using methods of physical pressure on the arrested, Stalin dispatched a coded telegram on January 20, 1939, to the Committee Secretaries of Oblasts and Krai, to the Central Committees of Republic Communist Parties, to the People's Commissars of Internal Affairs, and to the heads of N.K.V.D. organisations. This telegram stated:

"The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) explains that the application of methods of physical pressure in N.K.V.D. practice is permissible from 1937 on, in accordance with permission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). . . . It is known that all bourgeois intelligence services use methods of physical influence against the representatives of the Socialist proletariat and that they use them in their most scandalous forms. The question arises as to why the Socialist intelligence service should be more humanitarian against the mad agents of the bourgeoisie, against the deadly enemies of the working class and of the kolkhoz workers. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) considers that physical pressure should still be used obligatorily, as an exception applicable to known and obstinate enemies of the people, as a method both justifiable and appropriate."

Thus, Stalin had sanctioned in the name of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist party (Bolsheviks) the most brutal violation of Socialist legality, torture and oppression, which led as we have seen to the slandering and self-accusation of innocent people.

Not long ago—only several days before the present congress—we called to the Central Committee Presidium Session and interrogated the investigating Judge Rodos, who in his time investigated and interrogated Kossior, Chubar, and Kosaryev. He is a vile person, with the brain of a bird, and morally completely degenerate. And it was this man who was deciding the fate of prominent party workers: he was making judgments also concerning the politics in these matters, because having established their "crime," he provided there-with materials from which important political implications could be drawn.

The question arises whether a man with such an intellect could alone make the investigation in a manner to prove the guilt of people such as Kossior and others. No, he could not have done it without proper directives. At the Central Committee Presidium session told us :

"I was told that Kossior and Chubar were people's enemies and for this reason, I, as an investigative judge, had to make them confess that they are enemies." (Indignation in the hall.)

He could do this only through long tortures, which he did, receiving detailed instructions from Beria. We must say that at the Central Committee Presidium session he cynically declared : "I thought that I was executing the orders of the party." In this manner Stalin's orders concerning the use of methods of physical pressure against the arrested were in practice executed.*

These and many other facts show that all norms of correct party solution of problems were invalidated and everything was dependent upon the wilfulness of one man. The power accumulated in the hands of one person, Stalin, led to serious consequences during the great patriotic war.

When we look at many of our novels, films and historical "scientific studies," the rôle of Stalin in the patriotic war appears to be entirely improbable. Stalin had foreseen everything. The Soviet Army, on the basis of a strategic plan prepared by Stalin long before, used the tactics of so-called "active defence," i.e., tactics which, as we know, allowed the Germans to come up to Moscow and Stalingrad. Using such tactics the Soviet Army, supposedly, thanks only to Stalin's genius, turned to the offensive and subdued the enemy. The epic victory gained through the armed might of the land of the Soviets, through our heroic people, is ascribed in this type of novel, film and "scientific study," as being completely due to the strategic genius of Stalin.

We have to analyse this matter carefully because it has a tremendous significance not only from the historical, but especially from the political, educational and practical point of view.

* Khrushchev here describes the police investigator as "cynical" because he claimed to have executed party orders. But did Khrushchev himself not think that he was carrying out party orders when he took over the political direction of the purge in the Ukraine, in which Kossior and many others perished ? If he did not think so, he should clearly have refused to have anything to do with the purge ; and if he did think so, is it not unfair of him to describe the policeman as "cynical" ?

What are the facts of this matter ?

Before the war our press and all our political-educational work was characterised by its bragging tone : "When an enemy violates the holy Soviet soil, then for every blow of the enemy we will answer with three blows, and we will battle the enemy on his soil and we will win without much harm to ourselves." But these positive statements were not based in all areas on concrete facts which would actually guarantee the immunity of our borders.

During the war and after the war Stalin put forward the thesis that the tragedy which our nation experienced in the first part of the war was the result of the "unexpected" attack of the Germans against the Soviet Union. But, Comrades, this is completely untrue. As soon as Hitler came to power in Germany he assigned to himself the task of liquidating Communism. The Fascists were saying this openly ; they did not hide their plans.

So as to attain this aggressive end all sorts of pacts and blocks were created, such as the famous Berlin-Rome-Tokio Axis. Many facts from the pre-war period clearly showed that Hitler was going all out to begin a war against the Soviet State and that he had concentrated large armed units, together with armoured units, near the Soviet borders.

Documents which have now been published show that by April 3, 1941, Churchill, through his Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., Cripps, personally warned Stalin that the Germans had begun regrouping their armed units with the intent of attacking the Soviet Union.

It is self-evident that Churchill did not do this at all because of his friendly feeling towards the Soviet nation. He had in this his own imperialistic goals—to bring Germany and the U.S.S.R. into a bloody war and thereby to strengthen the position of the British Empire. Just the same Churchill affirmed in his writings that he sought to "warn Stalin and call his attention to the danger which threatened him." Churchill stressed this repeatedly in his dispatches of April 18 and in the following days. However, Stalin took no heed of these warnings. What is more, Stalin ordered that no credence be given to information of this sort, in order not to provoke the initiation of military operations.

We must assert that information of this sort concerning the threat of German armed invasion of Soviet territory was coming in also from our own military and diplomatic sources. However, because the leadership was conditioned against such information, such data was dispatched with fear and assessed with reservation.

Thus, for instance, information sent from Berlin on May 6, 1941, by

the Soviet military attaché, Captain Vorontsov, stated :

"Soviet Citizen Bozer . . . communicated to the deputy naval attaché that, according to a statement of a certain German officer from Hitler's Headquarters, Germany is preparing to invade the U.S.S.R. on May 14 through Finland, the Baltic countries, and Latvia. At the same time Moscow and Leningrad will be heavily raided and paratroopers landed in border cities. . . ."

In his report of May 22, 1941, the Deputy Military Attaché in Berlin, Khlopov, communicated that " . . . The attack of the German army is reportedly scheduled for June 15, but it is possible that it may begin in the first days of June. . . ."

A cable from our London Embassy dated June 18, 1941, stated :

"As of now Cripps is deeply convinced of the inevitability of armed conflict between Germany and the U.S.S.R. which will begin not later than the middle of June. According to Cripps, the Germans have at present concentrated 147 divisions (including air force and service units) along the Soviet borders. . . ."

Despite these particularly grave warnings, the necessary steps were not taken to prepare the country properly for defence and to prevent it from being caught unawares.

Did we have time and the capabilities for such preparations? Yes, we had the time and capabilities. Our industry was already so developed that it was capable of supplying fully the Soviet Army with everything that it needed. This is proven by the fact that although during the war we lost almost half of our industry and important industrial and food production areas as the result of enemy occupation of the Ukraine, Northern Caucasus and other Western parts of the country, the Soviet nation was still able to organise the production of military equipment in the Eastern parts of the country, instal there equipment taken from the Western industrial areas and to supply our armed forces with everything which was necessary to destroy the enemy.

Had our industry been mobilised properly and in time to supply the Army with the necessary material, our war-time losses would have been decidedly smaller. Such mobilisation had not been, however, started in time. And already in the first days of the war it became evident that our Army was badly armed, that we did not have enough artillery, tanks, and planes to throw the enemy back.

Soviet science and technology produced excellent models of tanks and artillery pieces before the war. But mass production of all this was not organised

and as a matter of fact we started to modernise our military equipment only on the eve of the war. As a result, at the time of the enemy's invasion of the Soviet land we did not have sufficient quantities either of old machinery which was no longer used for armament production or of new machinery which we had planned to introduce into armament production. The situation with anti-aircraft artillery was especially bad; we did not organise the production of anti-tank ammunition. Many fortified regions had proved to be indefensible as soon as they were attacked, because the old arms had been withdrawn and new ones were not yet available there.

This pertained, alas, not only to tanks, artillery, and planes. At the outbreak of the war we did not even have sufficient numbers of rifles to arm the mobilised manpower. I recall that in those days I telephoned to Comrade Malenkov from Kiev and told him :

"People have volunteered for the new army and demand arms. You must send us arms."

Malenkov answered me :

"We cannot send you arms. We are sending all our rifles to Leningrad and you have to arm yourselves." (Movement in the hall.)

Such was the armament situation.

In this connection we cannot forget, for instance, the following fact. Shortly before the invasion of the Soviet Union by the Hitlerite army, Korponos, who was Chief of the Kiev Special Military District (he was later killed at the front) wrote to Stalin that the German armies were at the Bug River, were preparing for an attack and in the very near future would probably start their offensive. In this connection Korponos proposed that a strong defence be organised, that 300,000 people be evacuated from the border areas and that several strong points be organised there : anti-tank ditches, trenches for the soldiers, &c.

Moscow answered this proposal with the assertion that this would be a provocation, that no preparatory defensive work should be undertaken at the borders, that the Germans were not to be given any pretext for the initiation of military action against us. Thus, our borders were insufficiently prepared to repel the enemy.

When the Fascist armies had actually invaded Soviet territory and military operations began, Moscow issued the order that German fire was not to be returned. Why? It was because Stalin, despite evident facts, thought that the war had not yet started, that this was only a provocative action on the part of several undisciplined sections of the German Army, and that our reaction

might serve as a reason for the Germans to begin the war.

The following fact is also known. On the eve of the invasion of the territory of the Soviet Union by the Hitlerite army a certain German citizen crossed our border and stated that the German armies had received orders to start the offensive against the Soviet Union on the night of June 22, at three o'clock. Stalin was informed about this immediately, but even this warning was ignored.

As you see, everything was ignored; warnings of certain army commanders, declarations of deserters from the enemy army, and even the open hostility of the enemy. Is this an example of the alertness of the Chief of the Party and of the State at this particularly significant historical moment?

And what were the results of this care-free attitude, this disregard of clear facts? The result was that already in the first hours and days the enemy had destroyed in our border regions a large part of our air force, artillery, and other military equipment; he annihilated large numbers of our military cadres and disorganised our military leadership; consequently we could not prevent the enemy from marching deep into the country.

Very grievous consequences, especially in reference to the beginning of the war, followed Stalin's annihilation of many military commanders and political workers during 1937-41 because of his suspiciousness and through slanderous accusations. During these years repressions were instituted against certain parts of military cadres, beginning literally at the company and battalion commander level and extending to the higher military centres; during this time the cadre of leaders who had gained military experience in Spain and in the Far East was almost completely liquidated.

The policy of large-scale repressions against the military cadres led also to undermined military discipline, because for several years officers of all ranks and even soldiers in the party and Kom-somol cells were taught to "unmask" their superiors as hidden enemies. (Movement in the hall.) It is natural that this caused a negative influence on the state of military discipline in the first war period.

And, as you know, we had before the war excellent military cadres which were unquestionably loyal to the party and to the fatherland. Suffice it to say that those of them who managed to survive despite severe tortures to which they were subjected in the prisons, have from the first war days shown themselves real patriots and heroically fought for the glory of the fatherland. I have

here in mind such comrades as Rokossovsky (who, as you know, had been gaoled), Gorbатов, Meretskoy (who is a delegate at the present Congress), Poklas (he was an excellent commander who perished at the front), and many, many others. However, many such commanders perished in camps and gaoles and the Army saw them no more.*

All this brought about the situation which existed at the beginning of the war and which was the great threat to our fatherland.

It would be incorrect to forget that after the first severe disaster and defeats at the front Stalin thought that this was the end. In one of his speeches in those days he said: "All that which Lenin created we have lost for ever."

After this Stalin for a long time actually did not direct the military operations and ceased to do anything whatever. He returned to active leadership only when some members of the Political Bureau visited him and told him that it was necessary to take certain steps immediately in order to improve the situation at the front.

Therefore, the threatening danger which hung over our fatherland in the first period of the war was largely due to the faulty methods of directing the nation and the party by Stalin himself.

However, we speak not only about the moment when the war began, which led to serious disorganisation of our army and brought us severe losses. Even after the war began, the nervousness and hysteria which Stalin demonstrated, interfering with actual military operations, caused our army serious damage.

Stalin was very far from an understanding of the real situation which was developing at the front. This was natural because during the whole patriotic war he never visited any section of the front or any liberated city except for one short ride on the Mozhaishk highway during a stabilised situation at the front. To this incident were dedicated many literary works full of fantasies of all sorts and so many paintings. Simultaneously, Stalin was interfering with operations and issuing orders which did not take into consideration the real situation at a given section of the front and which could not help but result in huge personnel losses.

* No figures are given of the victims of this purge, thought to number some 30,000 officers, including eleven Deputy Commissars of Defence and 75 out of the 80 generals and admirals on the Council of War. No reference is made to the senior generals liquidated at that time—among them those tried by a special military tribunal of the Soviet Supreme Court on June 11, 1937, who included Tukhachevsky. Voroshilov was one of the signatories of the court's findings on this occasion.

I will allow myself in this connection to bring out one characteristic fact which illustrates how Stalin directed operations at the fronts. There is present at this congress Marshal Bagramyan, who was once the Chief of Operations at the Headquarters of the South-western front and who can corroborate what I will tell you.

When there developed an exceptionally serious situation in the Kharkov region, we had correctly decided to drop an operation whose objective was to encircle Kharkov, because the real situation at that time would have threatened our army with fatal consequences if this operation were continued. We communicated this to Stalin, stating that the situation demanded changes in operational plans so that the enemy would be prevented from liquidating a sizeable concentration of our army.

Contrary to common sense, Stalin rejected our suggestion and issued the order to continue the operation aimed at the encirclement of Kharkov, despite the fact that at this time many army concentrations were themselves actually threatened with encirclement and liquidation.

I telephoned to Vasilevsky† and begged him:

"Alexander Mikhailovich, take a map (Vasilevsky is present here) and show Comrade Stalin the situation which has developed."

We should note that Stalin planned operations on a globe. (Animation in the hall.) Yes, Comrades, he used to take the globe and trace the front line on it. I said to Comrade Vasilevsky:

"Show him the situation on a map; in the present situation we cannot continue the operation which was planned. The old decision must be changed for the good of the cause."

Vasilevsky replied saying that Stalin had already studied this problem and that he, Vasilevsky, would not see Stalin further concerning this matter, because the latter didn't want to hear any arguments on the subject of this operation.

After my talk with Vasilevsky I telephoned to Stalin at his villa. But Stalin did not answer the telephone and Malenkov was at the receiver. I told Comrade Malenkov that I was calling from the front and that I wanted to

speak personally to Stalin. Stalin informed me through Malenkov that I should speak with Malenkov. I stated for the second time that I wished to inform Stalin personally about the grave situation which had arisen for us at the front. But Stalin did not consider it convenient to pick up the phone and again stated that I should speak to him through Malenkov, although he was only a few steps from the telephone.

After "listening" in this manner to our plea Stalin said, "Let everything remain as it is!"

And what was the result of this? The worst that we had expected. The Germans surrounded our army concentrations and consequently we lost hundreds of thousands of our soldiers.

This is Stalin's military "genius"; this is what it cost us. (Movement in the hall.)

On one occasion after the war, during a meeting of Stalin with members of the Political Bureau, Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan mentioned that Khrushchev must have been right when he telephoned concerning the Kharkov operation and that it was unfortunate that his suggestion had not been accepted.

You should have seen Stalin's fury! How could it be admitted that he, Stalin, had not been right! He is after all a "genius," and a genius cannot help but be right! Everyone can err, but Stalin considered that he never erred, that he was always right. He never acknowledged to anyone that he made any mistake, large or small, despite the fact that he made not a few mistakes in the matter of theory and in his practical activity. After the party Congress we shall probably have to re-evaluate many wartime military operations and to present them in their true light.

The tactics on which Stalin insisted without knowing the essence of the conduct of battle operations cost us much blood until we succeeded in stopping the opponent and going over to the offensive.

The military know that already by the end of 1941 instead of great operational manoeuvres flanking the opponent and penetrating behind his back, Stalin demanded incessant frontal attacks and the capture of one village after another. Because of this we paid with great losses until our generals, on whose shoulders rested the whole weight of conducting the war, succeeded in changing the situation and shifting to flexible manoeuvre operations, which immediately brought serious changes at the front favourable to us.

All the more shameful was the fact that after our great victory over the enemy which cost us so much Stalin

* Khrushchev obviously got carried away here, for Western statesmen who had dealings with Stalin during the war came away with the impression that he was not unacquainted with the use of military maps. It makes one wonder how often, and to what lengths, Khrushchev got carried away in other parts of the speech.

† Vasilevsky was then Chief of Staff.

began to downgrade many of the commanders who contributed so much to the victory over the enemy, because Stalin excluded every possibility that services rendered at the front should be credited to anyone but himself.

Stalin was very much interested in the assessment of Comrade Zhukov as a military leader. He asked me often for my opinion of Zhukov. I told him then, "I have known Zhukov for a long time; he is a good general and a good military leader." After the war Stalin began to tell all kinds of nonsense about Zhukov, among others the following:

"You praised Zhukov, but he does not deserve it. It is said that before each operation at the front Zhukov used to behave as follows: He used to take a handful of earth, smell it, and say, 'We can begin the attack,' or the opposite. 'The planned operation cannot be carried out.'"

I stated at that time, "Comrade Stalin, I do not know who invented this, but it is not true." It is possible that Stalin himself invented these things for the purpose of minimising the rôle and military talents of Marshal Zhukov.*

In this connection Stalin very energetically popularised himself as a great leader; in various ways he tried to inculcate in the people the version that all victories gained by the Soviet nation during the great patriotic war were due to the courage, daring, and genius of Stalin and of no one else. Exactly like Kuzma Kryuchkov† he put one dress on seven people at the same time. (Animation in the hall.)

In the same vein, let us take, for instance, our historical and military films and some literary creations; they make us feel sick. Their true objective is the propagation of the theme of praising Stalin as a military genius. Let us recall the film "The Fall of Berlin." Here only Stalin acts, he issues orders in the hall in which there are many empty chairs and only one man approached him and reports something to him—that is Poskrebyshv, his loyal shield-bearer.‡ (Laughter in the hall.)

* After the war Zhukov was first put in charge of the Odessa military district, and then of the Sverdlovsk military district in the Urals. The day after Stalin's death he came back to Moscow as Deputy Minister of Defence, and he replaced Bulganin as Minister of Defence when Malenkov took over the premiership from Malenkov in February, 1955.

† A famous Cossack who performed heroic feats against the Germans.

‡ Poskrebyshv was Stalin's personal assistant and, it is said, his evil genius. There has been no reference to him in the Soviet press since Stalin's death, not even in reports of the funeral, in which Poskrebyshv, as the man closest to

And where is the Military Command? Where is the Political Bureau? Where is the Government? What are they doing and with what are they engaged? There is nothing about them in the film. Stalin acts for everybody; he does not reckon with anyone; he asks no one for advice. Everything is shown to the nation in this false light. Why? In order to surround Stalin with glory, contrary to the facts and contrary to historical truth.

The question arises: where are the military on whose shoulders rested the burden of the war? They are not in the film; with Stalin in, no room was left for them.

Not Stalin, but the party as a whole, the Soviet Government, our heroic Army, its talented leaders and brave soldiers, the whole Soviet nation—these are the ones who assured the victory in the great patriotic war. (Tempestuous and prolonged applause.)

The Central Committee members, Ministers, our economic leaders, leaders of Soviet culture, directors of territorial party and Soviet organisations, engineers, and technicians—everyone of them in his own place of work generously gave of his strength and knowledge towards ensuring victory over the enemy.

Exceptional heroism was shown by our hard core—surrounded by glory is our whole working class—our kolkhoz peasantry, the Soviet intelligentsia, who under the leadership of party organisations overcame untold hardships and, bearing the hardships of war, devoted all their strength to the cause of the defence of the fatherland.

Great and brave deeds during the war were accomplished by our Soviet women who bore on their backs the heavy load of production work in the factories, on the kolkhozes, and in various economic and cultural sectors; many women participated directly in the great patriotic war at the fronts; our brave youth contributed immeasurably at the front and at home to the defence of the Soviet fatherland and to the annihilation of the enemy.

Immortal are the services of the Soviet soldiers, of our commanders and political workers of all ranks; after the loss of a considerable part of the Army in the first war months they did not lose their heads and were able to reorganise during the progress of combat; they created and toughened during the progress of the war a strong

Stalin, could have been expected to take some part. He appears to have been "liquidated" by Stalin's successors in the same manner—which they now denounce—as Stalin liquidated people whom he thought inconvenient.

and heroic Army and not only resisted the pressure of the strong and cunning enemy but also smashed him.

The magnificent and heroic deeds of hundreds of millions of people of the East and of the West during the fight against the threat of Fascist subjugation which loomed before us will live centuries and millenia in the memory of thankful humanity. (Thunderous applause).

The main rôle and the main credit for the victorious ending of the war belongs to our Communist party, to the armed forces of the Soviet Union, and to the tens of millions of Soviet people raised by the party. (Thunderous and prolonged applause.)

Comrades, let us reach for some other facts. The Soviet Union is justly considered as a model of a multinational state because we have in practice assured the equality and friendship of all nations which live in our great fatherland.

All the more monstrous are the acts whose initiator was Stalin and which are crude violations of the basic Leninist principles of the nationality policy of the Soviet State. We refer to the mass deportations from their native places of whole nations, together with all Communists and Komsomols without any exception; this deportation action was not dictated by any military considerations.

Thus, already at the end of 1943, when there occurred a permanent breakthrough at the fronts of the great patriotic war in favour of the Soviet Union, a decision was taken and executed concerning the deportation of all the Karachai from the lands on which they lived. In the same period, at the end of December, 1943, the same lot befell the whole population of the Autonomous Kalmyk Republic. In March, 1944, all the Chechen and Ingush people were deported and the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic was liquidated.

In April, 1944, all Balkars were deported to faraway places from the territory of the Kabardino-Balkar Autonomous Republic and the Republic itself was renamed Autonomous Kabardyn Republic. The Ukrainians avoided meeting this fate only because there were too many of them and there was no place to which to deport them. Otherwise, he would have deported them also. (Laughter and animation in the hall).

Not only a Marxist-Leninist but also no man of common sense can grasp how it is possible to make whole nations responsible for inimical activity, including women, children, old people, Communists, and Komsomols, to use mass repression against them, and to

expose them to misery and suffering for the hostile acts of individual persons or groups of persons.

After the conclusion of the patriotic war the Soviet nation stressed the pride the magnificent victories gained through great sacrifices and tremendous efforts. The country experienced a period of political enthusiasm. The party came out of the war even more united; in the fire of the war party cadres were tempered and hardened. Under such conditions nobody could have even thought of the possibility of some plot in the party.

And it was precisely at this time that the so-called "Leningrad affair" was born. As we have now proved, this case was fabricated. Those who innocently lost their lives included Comrades Voznesensky, Kuznetsov, Rodionov, Popkov, and others.*

As is known, Voznesensky and Kuznetsov were talented and eminent leaders. Once they stood very close to Stalin. It is sufficient to mention that Stalin made Voznesensky First Deputy to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Kuznetsov was elected Secretary of the Central Committee. The very fact that Stalin entrusted Kuznetsov with the supervision of the State security organs shows the trust which he enjoyed.

How did it happen that these persons were branded as enemies of the people and liquidated?

Facts prove that the "Leningrad affair" was also the result of wilfulness which Stalin exercised against party cadres.

Had a normal situation existed in the party's Central Committee and in the Central Committee Political Bureau, affairs of this nature would have been examined there in accordance with party practice, and all pertinent facts assessed; as a result such an affair as well as others would not have happened.

We must state that after the war the situation became even more complicated. Stalin became even more capricious, irritable and brutal; in particular his suspicion grew. His persecution mania reached unbelievable dimensions. Many workers were becoming enemies before his very eyes. After the war Stalin separated himself from the collective even more. Everything was decided by him alone with-

* Voznessensky, the chief economic planner, Rodionov, Premier of the Russian Republic, and Kuznetsov and Popkov, party secretaries, had all been connected with the Leningrad party organisation, through which they rose to the highest posts in the party and the State.

out any consideration for anyone or anything.

This unbelievable suspicion was cleverly taken advantage of by the abject provocateur and vile enemy, Beria, who had murdered thousands of Communists and loyal Soviet people. The elevation of Voznesensky and Kuznetsov alarmed Beria. As we have now proved, it had been precisely Beria who had "suggested" to Stalin the fabrication by him and by his confidants of material in the form of declarations and anonymous letters, and in the form of various rumours and talks.

The party's Central Committee has examined this so-called "Leningrad affair"; persons who innocently suffered are now rehabilitated and honour has been restored to the glorious Leningrad party organisations. Abakumov and others who had fabricated this affair were brought before a court; their trial took place in Leningrad and they received what they deserved.

The question arises: Why is it that we see the truth of this affair only now, and why did we not do something earlier, during Stalin's life, in order to prevent the loss of innocent lives? It was because Stalin personally supervised the "Leningrad affair," and the majority of the Political Bureau members did not, at that time, know all of the circumstances in these matters, and could not therefore intervene.

When Stalin received certain material from Beria and Abakumov, without examining this slanderous material, he ordered an investigation of the "affair" of Voznesensky and Kuznetsov. With this their fate was sealed.

Instructive in the same way is the case of the Mingrelian Nationalist organisation which supposedly existed in Georgia. As is known, resolutions by the Central Committee of the Communist party of the Soviet Union were made concerning this case in November, 1951, and in March, 1952. These resolutions were made without prior discussion with the Political Bureau. Stalin had personally dictated them. They made serious accusations against many loyal Communists. On the basis of falsified documents it was proved that there existed in Georgia a supposedly nationalist organisation whose objective was the liquidation of the Soviet power in that Republic with the help of imperialist powers. In this connection, a number of responsible party and Soviet workers were arrested in Georgia. As was later proved, this was a slander directed against the Georgian party organisation.

We know that there have been at times manifestations of local bourgeois

nationalism in Georgia as in several other Republics. The question arises: Could it be possible that in the period during which the resolutions referred to above were made, nationalist tendencies grew so much that there was a danger of Georgia leaving the Soviet Union and joining Turkey? (Animation in the hall, laughter.)

This is, of course, nonsense. It is impossible to imagine how such assumptions could enter anyone's mind. Everyone knows how Georgia has developed economically and culturally under Soviet rule. Industrial production of the Georgian Republic is 27 times greater than it was before the Revolution. Many new industries have arisen in Georgia which did not exist there before the Revolution: Iron smelting, an oil industry, a machine construction industry, &c. Illiteracy has long since been liquidated, which, in pre-revolutionary Georgia, included 78 per cent of the population.

Could the Georgians, comparing the situation in their Republic with the hard situation of the working masses in Turkey, be aspiring to join Turkey? In 1955 Georgia produced eighteen times as much steel per person as Turkey. Georgia produces nine times as much electrical energy per person as Turkey. According to the available 1950 census, 65 per cent of Turkey's total population are illiterate, and of the women, 80 per cent are illiterate. Georgia has nineteen institutions of higher learning which have about 39,000 students. The prosperity of the working people has grown tremendously in Georgia under Soviet rule. It is clear that as the economy and culture develop, and as the Socialist consciousness of the working masses in Georgia grows, the source from which bourgeois nationalism draws its strength evaporates.

As has since transpired, there was no nationalist organisation in Georgia. Thousands of innocent people fell victim of wilfulness and lawlessness. All of this happened under Stalin's leadership of genius—"the great son of the Georgian nation," as Georgians liked to refer to Stalin. (Animation in the hall.)

The wilfulness of Stalin showed itself not only in decisions concerning the internal life of the country but also in the international relations of the Soviet Union.

The July plenum of the Central Committee studied in detail the reasons for the development of conflict with Yugoslavia. It was a shameful rôle which Stalin played here. The "Yugoslav affair" contained no problems which could not have been solved through party discussions among comrades. There was no significant basis for the development of this "affair," it was

completely possible to have prevented the rupture of relations with that country. This does not mean, however, that the Yugoslav leaders did not make mistakes or did not have shortcomings. But these mistakes and shortcomings were magnified in a monstrous manner by Stalin, which resulted in a breakdown of relations with a friendly country.

I recall the first days when the conflict between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia began artificially to be blown up. Once, when I came from Kiev to Moscow, I was invited to visit Stalin who, pointing to the copy of a letter lately sent to Tito, asked me: "Have you read this?"

Not waiting for my reply, he answered: "I will shake my little finger—and there will be no more Tito. He will fall."

We have dearly paid for this "shaking of the little finger." This statement reflected Stalin's mania for greatness, but he acted just that way: "I will shake my little finger—and there will be no Kossior"; "I will shake my little finger once more and Postyshev and Chubar will be no more"; "I will shake my little finger again—Voznesensky, Kuznetsov and many others will disappear."

But this did not happen to Tito. No matter how much or how little Stalin shook, not only his little finger but everything else that he could shake, Tito did not fall. Why? The reason was that, in this case of disagreement with the Yugoslav comrades, Tito had behind him a State and a people who had gone through a severe school of fighting for liberty and independence, a people which gave support to its leaders.

You see to what Stalin's mania for greatness led. He had completely lost consciousness of reality; he demonstrated his suspicion and haughtiness not only in relation to individuals in the U.S.S.R., but in relation to whole parties and nations.

We have carefully examined the case of Yugoslavia and have found a proper solution which is approved by the peoples of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia as well as by the working masses of all the peoples' democracies and by all progressive humanity. The liquidation of the abnormal relationship with Yugoslavia was done in the interest of the whole camp of socialism, in the interest of strengthening peace in the whole world.

Let us also recall the "affair of the doctor-plotters." (Animation in the hall.) Actually there was no "affair" outside of the declaration of the woman doctor Timashuk, who was probably influenced or ordered by someone (after all she was an unofficial collaborator of the organs of State security) to write

Stalin a letter in which she declared that doctors were applying supposedly improper methods of medical treatment.

Such a letter was sufficient for Stalin to reach an immediate conclusion that there are doctor-plotters in the Soviet Union. He issued orders to arrest a group of eminent Soviet medical specialists. He personally issued advice on the conduct of the investigation and the method of interrogation of the arrested persons.

He said that Academician Vinogradov should be put in chains, that another one should be beaten. Present at this congress as a delegate is the former Minister of State Security, Comrade Ignatiev. Stalin told him curtly: "If you do not obtain confessions from the doctors we will shorten you by a head." (Tumult in the hall.)

Stalin personally called the investigative judge, gave him instructions, advised him on which investigative methods should be used; these methods were simple—beat, beat, and once again beat.

Shortly after the doctors were arrested we members of the Political Bureau received protocols with the doctors' confessions of guilt. After distributing these protocols Stalin told us:

"You are blind like young kittens; what will happen without me? The country will perish because you do not know how to recognise enemies."

The case was so presented that no one could verify the facts on which the investigation was based. There was no possibility of trying to verify facts by contacting those who had made the confessions of guilt.

We felt, however, that the case of the arrested doctors was questionable. We knew some of these people personally because they had once treated us. When we examined this "case" after Stalin's death, we found it to be fabricated from beginning to end.

This ignominious "case" was made up by Stalin; he did not, however, have the time in which to bring it to an end (as he conceived that end) and for this reason the doctors are still alive. Now all have been rehabilitated; they are working in the same places they were working before; they treat top individuals, not excluding members of the Government; they have our full confidence; and they execute their duties honestly, as they did before.

In organising the various dirty and shameful cases, a very base rôle was played by the rabid enemy of our party, an agent of a foreign intelligence service—Beria, who had wormed his way into Stalin's confidence. In what way could this provocateur gain such a position in the party and in the State, so as to become the first Deputy Chairman

of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union and a member of the Central Committee Political Bureau? It has now been established that this villain had climbed up the Government ladder over an untold number of corpses.

Were there any signs that Beria was an enemy of the party? Yes, there were. Already in 1937 at a Central Committee plenum, former People's Commissar of Health Protection, Kaminsky, said that Beria worked for the Mussavat intelligence service. But the Central Committee plenum had barely concluded when Kaminsky was arrested and then shot. Had Stalin examined Kaminsky's statement? No, because Stalin believed in Beria, and that was enough for him. And when Stalin believed in anyone or anything, then no one could say anything which was contrary to his opinion; anyone who would dare to express opposition would have met the same fate as Kaminsky.

There were other signs also. The declaration which Comrade Snegov made to the party's Central Committee is interesting. (Parenthetically speaking, he was also rehabilitated not long ago, after 17 years in prison.) In this declaration Snegov writes:

"In connection with the proposed rehabilitation of the former Central Committee member Kartvelishvili-Lavryentiev, I have entrusted to the hands of the representative of the Committee of State Security a detailed deposition concerning Beria's rôle in the disposition of the Kartvelishvili case and concerning the criminal motives by which Beria was guided."

In my opinion it is indispensable to recall an important fact pertaining to this case and to communicate it to the Central Committee, because I did not consider it as proper to include in the investigation documents.

On October 30, 1931, at the session of the organisational bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Kartvelishvili, Secretary of the Transcaucasian Krai Committee, made a report. All members of the Executive of the Krai Committee were present; of them I alone am alive.

During this session Stalin made a motion at the end of his speech concerning the organisation of the secretariat of the Transcaucasian Krai Committee, that it be composed of the following: First Secretary Kartvelishvili, Second Secretary Beria. (It was then for the first time in the party's history that Beria's name was mentioned as a candidate for a party position.) Kartvelishvili answered that he knew Beria well and for that reason refused categorically to work together with him. Stalin proposed then that this matter be left open and that it be solved in the

process of the work itself. Two days later a decision was arrived at that Beria would receive the party post and that Kartvelishvili would be deported from the Transcaucasus.

This fact can be confirmed by Comrades Mikoyan and Kaganovich who were present at that session.

The long unfriendly relations between Kartvelishvili and Beria were widely known; they date back to the time when Comrade Sergo* was active in the Transcaucasus; Kartvelishvili was the closest assistant of Sergo. The unfriendly relationship impelled Beria to fabricate a "case" against Kartvelishvili.

It is a characteristic thing that in this "case" Kartvelishvili was charged with a terrorist act against Beria.

The indictment in the Beria case contains a discussion of his crimes. Some things should, however, be recalled, especially since it is possible that not all delegates to the congress have read this document. I wish to recall Beria's bestial disposition of the cases of Kedrov, Golubiev, and Golubiev's adopted mother, Baturina—persons who wished to inform the Central Committee concerning Beria's treacherous activity. They were shot without any trial and the sentence was passed *ex post facto*, after the execution.

Here is what the old Communist, Comrade Kedrov, wrote to the Central Committee through Comrade Andreyev (Comrade Andreyev was then a Central Committee Secretary):

"I am calling to you for help from a gloomy cell of the Lefortovky prison. Let my cry of horror reach your ears; do not remain deaf; take me under your protection; please help remove the nightmare of interrogations and show that this is all a mistake.

"I suffer innocently. Please believe me. Time will testify to the truth. I am not an agent-provocateur of the Tsarist Okhrana; I am not a spy; I am not a member of an anti-Soviet organisation, of which I am being accused on the basis of denunciations. I am also not guilty of any other crimes against the party and the Government. I am an old Bolshevik, free of any stain; I have honestly fought for almost forty years in the ranks of the party for the good and the prosperity of the nation. . . .

"... To-day, I, a 62-year-old man, am being threatened by the investigative judges with more severe, cruel, and degrading methods of physical pressure. They are no longer capable of becoming aware of their error and of recognising that their handling of my case is illegal

*"Comrade Sergo" is Ordzhonikidze, the Politburo member and Minister, who, as Khrushchev reveals later, committed suicide. The official announcement at the time said that his death was due to a heart attack.

and impermissible. They try to justify their actions by picturing me as a hardened and raving enemy and are demanding increased repressions. But let the party know that I am innocent and that there is nothing which can turn a loyal son of the party into an enemy, even right up to his last dying breath.

"But I have no way out. I cannot deflect from myself the hastily approaching new and powerful blows.

"Everything, however, has its limits. My torture has reached the extreme. My health is broken, my strength and my energy are waning, the end is drawing near. To die in a Soviet prison, branded as a vile traitor to the fatherland—what can be more monstrous for an honest man? And how monstrous all this is. Unsurpassed bitterness and pain grips my heart.

"No. No. This will not happen; this cannot be, I cry. Neither the party, nor the Soviet Government, nor the People's Commissar, L. P. Beria, will permit this cruel, irreparable injustice. I am firmly convinced that given a quiet, objective examination, without any foul rantings, without any anger, and without the fearful tortures, it would be easy to prove the baselessness of the charges. I believe deeply that truth and justice will triumph. I believe. I believe."

The old Bolshevik, Comrade Kedrov, was found innocent by the military collegium. But despite this, he was shot at Beria's order. (Indignation in the hall.)

Beria also handled cruelly the family of Comrade Ordzhonikidze. Why? Because Ordzhonikidze had tried to prevent Beria from realising his shameful plans. Beria had cleared from his way all persons who could possibly interfere with him. Ordzhonikidze was always an opponent of Beria, which he told to Stalin. Instead of examining this affair and taking appropriate steps Stalin allowed the liquidation of Ordzhonikidze's brother and brought Ordzhonikidze himself to such a state that he was forced to shoot himself. (Indignation in the hall.) Such was Beria.

Beria was unmasked by the party's Central Committee shortly after Stalin's death. As a result of the particularly detailed legal proceedings it was established that Beria had committed monstrous crimes and Beria was shot.

The question arises why Beria, who had liquidated tens of thousands of party and Soviet workers, was not unmasked during Stalin's life? He was not unmasked earlier because he had utilised very skilfully Stalin's weaknesses; feeding him with suspicions, he assisted Stalin in everything and acted with his support.

Comrades:

The cult of the individual acquired such monstrous dimensions chiefly because Stalin himself, using all conceivable methods, supported the

glorification of his own person. This is supported by numerous facts. One of the most characteristic examples of Stalin's self-glorification and of his lack of even elementary modesty is the edition of his "Short Biography," which was published in 1948.

This book is an expression of the most dissolute flattery, an example of making a man into a Godhead, of transforming him into an infallible sage, "the greatest leader, sublime strategist of all times and nations." In the end no more words could be found with which to lift Stalin up to the heavens. We need not give here examples of the loathsome adulation filling this book. All we need to add is that they were all approved and edited by Stalin personally and some of them were added in his own handwriting to the draft text of the book.

What did Stalin consider essential to write into this book? Did he want to cool the ardour of his flatterers who were composing his "short biography"? No. He marked the very places where he thought that the praise of his services was insufficient. Here are some examples characterising Stalin's activity, added in Stalin's own hand:

"In this fight against the septsics and capitulators, the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Bukharinites and Kamenevites, there was definitely welded together, after Lenin's death, that leading core of the party . . . that upheld the great banner of Lenin, rallied the party behind Lenin's behests, and brought the Soviet people into the broad road of industrialising the country and collectivising the rural economy. The leader of this core and the guiding force of the party and the State was Comrade Stalin."

Thus writes Stalin himself. Then he adds:

"Although he performed his task of leader of the party and the people with consummate skill and enjoyed the unreserved support of the entire Soviet people, Stalin never allowed his work to be marred by the slightest hint of vanity, conceit, or self-adulation.

Where and when could a leader so praise himself? Is this worthy of a leader of the Marxist-Leninist type? No. Precisely against this did Marx and Engels take such a strong position. This also was always sharply condemned by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. In the draft text of Stalin's biography appeared the following sentence:

"Stalin is the Lenin of to-day."

This sentence appeared to Stalin to be

** In the book itself, the leading core of the party is said to have consisted of Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, and others, but Khrushchev apparently thought it politic to replace this tainted tribute to his colleagues by excision marks in this quotation.*

too weak, so in his own handwriting he changed it to read :

"Stalin is the worthy continuer of Lenin's work, or, as it is said in our party, Stalin is the Lenin of to-day."

You see how well it is said, not by the nation but by Stalin himself.

It is possible to give many such self-praising appraisals written into the draft text of that book in Stalin's hand. Especially generously does he endow himself with praises pertaining to his military genius, to his talent for strategy. I will cite one more insertion made by Stalin concerning the theme of the Stalinist military genius.

"The advanced Soviet science of war received further development," he writes, "at Comrade Stalin's hands. Comrade Stalin elaborated the theory of the permanently operating factors that decide the issue of wars, of active defence and the laws of counter-offensive and offensive, of the co-operation of all Services and arms in modern warfare, of the rôle of big tank masses and air forces in modern war, and of the artillery as the most formidable of the armed Services. At the various stages of the war Stalin's genius found the correct solutions that took account of all the circumstances of the situation." (Movement in the hall.)

And further, Stalin writes :

"Stalin's military mastership was displayed both in defence and offence. Comrade Stalin's genius enabled him to divine the enemy's plans and defeat them. The battles in which Comrade Stalin directed the Soviet armies are brilliant examples of operational military skill."

In this manner was Stalin praised as a strategist. Who did this? Stalin himself, not in his rôle as a strategist but in the rôle of an author-editor, one of the main creators of his self-adulatory biography.

Such, Comrades, are the facts. We should rather say shameful facts.

And one additional fact from the same "Short Biography" of Stalin. As is known, "The Short Course of the History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)" was written by a Commission of the Party Central Committee. This book, parenthetically, was also permeated with the cult of the individual and was written by a designated group of authors. This fact was reflected in the following formulation on the proof copy of the "Short Biography of Stalin" :

"A Commission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), under the direction of Comrade Stalin and with his most active personal participation, has prepared a 'Short Course of the History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)'. "

But even this phrase did not satisfy Stalin: the following sentence replaced

it in the final version of the "Short Biography" :

"In 1938 appeared the book, 'History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Short Course,' written by Comrade Stalin and approved by a Commission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)."

Can one add anything more? (Animation in the hall.)

As you see, a surprising metamorphosis changed the work created by a group into a book written by Stalin. It is not necessary to state how and why this metamorphosis took place. A pertinent question comes to mind: If Stalin is the author of this book, why did he need to praise the person of Stalin so much and to transform the whole post-October historical period of our glorious Communist party solely into an action of "the Stalin genius"?

Did this book properly reflect the efforts of the party in the Socialist transformation of the country, in the construction of Socialist society, in the industrialisation and collectivisation of the country, and also other steps taken by the party which undeviatingly travelled the path outlined by Lenin? This book speaks principally about Stalin, about his speeches, about his reports. Everything without the smallest exception is tied to his name.

And when Stalin himself asserts that he himself wrote the "Short Course of the History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)," this calls at least for amazement. Can a Marxist-Leninist thus write about himself, praising his own person to the heavens? Or let us take the matter of the Stalin prizes. (Movement in the hall.) Not even the Tsars created prizes which they named after themselves.

Stalin recognised as the best a text of the national anthem of the Soviet Union which contains not a word about the Communist party; it contains, however, the following unprecedented praise of Stalin: "Stalin brought us up in loyalty to the people, he inspired us to great toil and feats." In these lines of the anthem the whole educational, directional, and inspirational activity of the great Leninist party is ascribed to Stalin. This is, of course, a clear deviation from Marxism-Leninism, a clear debasing and belittling of the rôle of the party. We should add for your information that the Presidium of the Central Committee has already passed a resolution concerning the composition of a new text of the anthem, which will reflect the rôle of the people, and the rôle of the party. (Loud, prolonged applause.)

And was it without Stalin's knowledge that many of the largest enterprises and towns were named after

him? Was it without his knowledge that Stalin monuments were erected in the whole country—these “memorials to the living”? It is a fact that Stalin himself signed on July 2, 1951, a resolution of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers concerning the erection on the Volga-Don canal of an impressive monument to Stalin; on September 4 of the same year he issued an order making 33 tons of copper available for the construction of this impressive monument. Anyone who has visited the Stalingrad area must have seen the huge statue which is being built there, and that on a site which hardly any people frequent. Huge sums were spent to build it when people of this area had lived since the war in huts. Consider yourself, was Stalin right when he wrote in his biography that “... he did not allow in himself . . . even a shadow of conceit, pride, or self-adoration”?

At the same time Stalin gave proof of his lack of respect for Lenin's memory. It is not a coincidence that, despite the decision taken over thirty years ago to build a Palace of Soviets as a monument to Vladimir Ilyich, this palace was not built, its construction was always postponed, and the project allowed to lapse.

We cannot fail to recall the Soviet Government resolution of August 14, 1925, concerning “the founding of Lenin Prizes for Educational Work.” This resolution was published in the press, but until this day there are no Lenin Prizes. This, too, should be corrected. (Tumultuous, prolonged applause.)

During Stalin's life, thanks to the methods which I have mentioned, and quoting facts, for instance, from the “Short Biography” of Stalin, all events were explained as if Lenin had played only a secondary rôle, even during the October Socialist Revolution. In many films and in many literary works, the figure of Lenin was incorrectly presented and inadmissibly belittled.

Stalin loved to see the film “The Unforgettable Year of 1919,” in which he was shown on the steps of an armoured train and where he was practically vanquishing the foe with his own sabre. Let Kliment Yefremovich, our dear friend, find the necessary courage and write the truth about Stalin; after all, he knows how Stalin had “fought.” It will be difficult for Comrade Voroshilov to undertake this, but it would be good if he did it. Everyone will approve of it, both the people and the party. Even his grandsons will thank him. (Prolonged applause.)

In speaking about the events of the October Revolution and about the Civil War, the impression was created that Stalin always played the main rôle, as

if everywhere and always Stalin had suggested to Lenin what to do and how to do it. However, this is slander of Lenin. (Prolonged applause.)

I will probably not sin against the truth when I say that 99 per cent of the persons present here heard and knew very little about Stalin before the year 1924, while Lenin was known to all; he was known to the whole party, to the whole nation, from the children up to the greybeards. (Tumultuous prolonged applause.)

All this has to be thoroughly revised, so that history, literature, and the fine arts properly reflect V. I. Lenin's rôle and the great deeds of our Communist party and of the Soviet people, the creative people-creator. (Applause.)

Comrades! The cult of the individual has caused the employment of faulty principles in party work and in economic activity; it brought about rule violation of internal party and Soviet democracy, sterile administration, deviations of all sorts, the covering up of shortcomings, and the varnishing of reality. Our nation gave birth to many flatterers and specialists in false optimism and deceit.

We should also not forget that owing to the numerous arrests of party, Soviet, and economic leaders, many workers began to work uncertainly, showed over-cautiousness, feared all which was new, feared their own shadows, and began to show less initiative in their work. Take, for instance, party and Soviet resolutions. They were prepared in a routine manner often without considering the concrete situation. This went so far that party workers, even during the smallest sessions, read their “speeches.” All this produced the danger of formalising the party and Soviet work and of bureaucratising the whole apparatus.

Stalin's reluctance to consider life's realities and the fact that he was not aware of the real state of affairs in the provinces can be illustrated by his direction of agriculture. All those who interested themselves even a little in the national situation saw the difficult situation in agriculture, but Stalin never even noted it. Did we tell Stalin about this? Yes, we told him, but he did not support us. Why? Because Stalin never travelled anywhere, did not meet city and kolkhoz workers; he did not know the actual situation in the provinces. He knew the country and agriculture only from films. And these films had dressed up and beautified the existing situation in agriculture.

Many films so pictured kolkhoz life that the tables were bending from the weight of turkeys and geese. Evidently Stalin thought that it was actually so.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin looked at life

differently; he was always close to the people; he used to receive peasant delegates, and often spoke at factory gatherings; he used to visit villages and talk with the peasants.

Stalin separated himself from the people and never went anywhere. This went on for dozens of years. The last time he visited a village was in January, 1928, when he went to Siberia in connection with grain deliveries. How then could he have known the situation in the provinces?

And when he was once told during a discussion that our situation on the land was a difficult one and that the situation with cattle breeding and meat production was especially bad, a commission was formed which was charged with the preparation of a resolution called, "Means towards further development of animal breeding in Kolkhozes and Sovkhozes." We worked out this project.

Of course, our proposals at that time did not contain all possibilities, but we did charter ways in which animal breeding on the kolkhozes and Sovkhozes would be raised. We had proposed then to raise the prices of such products in order to create material incentives for the kolkhoz and Sovkhoz workers in the development of cattle breeding. But our project was not accepted and in February, 1953, was laid aside entirely.

What is more, while reviewing this project Stalin proposed that the taxes paid by the kolkhozes and by the kolkhoz workers should be raised by 40,000 million roubles. According to him the peasants are well off and the kolkhoz worker would need to sell only one more chicken to pay his tax in full.

Imagine what this meant. Certainly 40,000 million roubles is a sum which the kolkhoz workers did not get for all the products which they sold to the Government. In 1952, for instance, the kolkhozes and the kolkhoz workers received 26,280 million roubles for all their products delivered and sold to the Government. And did Stalin's position then rest on data of any sort whatever? Of course not.

In such cases facts and figures did not interest him. If Stalin said anything, it meant it was so—after all, he was a "genius"—and a genius does not need to count, he only needs to look and can immediately tell how it should be. When he expresses his opinion, everyone has to repeat it and to admire his wisdom.

But how much wisdom was contained in the proposal to raise the agricultural tax by 40,000 million roubles? None, absolutely none, because the proposal was not based on an actual assessment of the situation but on the fantastic ideas of a person divorced from reality.

We are currently beginning slowly to work our way out of a difficult agricultural situation. The speeches of the delegates to the twentieth Congress please us all, we are glad that many delegates deliver speeches, that there are conditions for the fulfilment of the sixth Five-year Plan for animal husbandry, not during the period of five years, but within two to three years. We are certain that the commitments of the new Five-year Plan will be accomplished successfully. (Prolonged applause).

Comrades!

If we sharply criticise to-day the cult of the individual which was so widespread during Stalin's life and if we speak about the many negative phenomena generated by this cult which is so alien to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, various persons may ask: "How could it be? Stalin headed the party and the country for 30 years and many victories were gained during his lifetime. Can we deny this?" In my opinion, the question can be asked in this manner only by those who are blinded and hopelessly hypnotised by the cult of the individual, only by those who do not understand the essence of the Revolution and of the Soviet State, only by those who do not understand, in a Leninist manner, the rôle of the party and of the nation in the development of the Soviet society.

The Socialist Revolution was attained by the working class and by the poor peasantry with the partial support of middle-class peasants. It was attained by the people under the leadership of the Bolshevik party. Lenin's great service consisted in the fact that he created a militant party of the working class, but he was armed with Marxist understanding of the laws of social development and with the science of proletarian victory on the fight with capitalism, and he steered this party in the crucible of the revolutionary struggle of the masses of the people. During this fight the party consistently defended the interests of the people, became its experienced leader, and led the working masses to power, to the creation of the first Socialist State.

You remember well the wise words of Lenin that the Soviet State is strong because of the awareness of the masses that history is created by the millions and tens of millions of people. Our historical victories were attained thanks to the organisational work of the party, to the many provincial organisations, and to the self-sacrificing work of our great nation. These victories are the result of the great drive and activity of the nation and of the party as a whole; they are not at all the fruit of the leadership of Stalin, as the situation was pictured

during the period of the cult of the individual.

If we are to consider this matter as Marxist-Leninists, then we have to state unequivocally that the practice of leadership which came into being during the last years of Stalin's life became a serious obstacle in the path of Soviet social development.

Stalin often failed for months to take up some extremely important problems concerning the life of the party and of the State whose solution could not be delayed. During Stalin's leadership our peaceful relations with other nations were often threatened, because one-man decisions could cause and often did cause great complications.

In recent years, when we managed to free ourselves of the harmful practice of the cult of the individual and took several proper steps in the sphere of internal and external policies, everyone saw how activity grew before their very eyes, how the creative activity of the broad working masses developed, how favourably all this acted upon the development of economy and of culture (Applause.)

Some comrades may ask us : where were the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee ? Why did they not assert themselves against the cult of the individual in time ? And why is this being done only now ?

First of all we have to consider the fact that the members of the Political Bureau viewed these matters in a different way at different times. Initially, many of them backed Stalin actively because Stalin was one of the strongest Marxists, and his logic, his strength, and his will greatly influenced the cadres and party work.

It is known that Stalin, after Lenin's death, especially during the first years, actively fought for Leninism against the enemies of Leninist theory and against those who deviated. Beginning with Leninist theory, the party, with its Central Committee at the head, started on a great scale the work of Socialist industrialisation of the country, agricultural collectivisation and the cultural revolution. At that time Stalin gained great popularity, sympathy, and support. The party had to fight those who attempted to lead the country away from the correct Leninist path ; it had to fight Trotskyites, Zinovievites, and Rightists, and the bourgeois nationalists. This fight was indispensable. Later, however, Stalin, abusing his power more and more, began to fight eminent party and Government leaders and to use terroristic methods against honest Soviet people. As we have already shown, Stalin thus handled such eminent party and Government leaders as

Kossior, Rudzutak, Eikhe, Postyshev, and many others.

Attempts to oppose groundless suspicions and charges resulted in the opponent falling victim of the repression. This characterised the fall of Comrade Postyshev. In one of his speeches Stalin expressed his dissatisfaction with Postyshev and asked him :

"What are you actually ?"

Postyshev answered clearly :

"I am a Bolshevik, Comrade Stalin, a Bolshevik."

This assertion was at first considered to show a lack of respect for Stalin ; later it was considered a harmful act and consequently resulted in Postyshev's annihilation and branding without any reason as a "people's enemy."

In the situation which then prevailed, I talked often with Nikolai Aleksandrovich Bulganin ; once when we two were travelling in a car, he said :

"It has happened sometimes that a man goes to Stalin on his invitation as a friend. And when he sits with Stalin, he does not know where he will be sent next, home or to gaol."

It is clear that such conditions put every member of the Political Bureau in a very difficult situation. And when we also consider the fact that in the last years the Central Committee plenary sessions were not convened and that the sessions of the Political Bureau occurred only occasionally, from time to time, then we will understand how difficult it was for any member of the Political Bureau to take a stand against one or another unjust or improper procedure, against serious errors and shortcomings in the practices of leadership.

As we have already shown, many decisions were taken either by one person or in a roundabout way, without collective discussions. The sad fate of Political Bureau member Comrade Voznesensky, who fell victim to Stalin's repressions, is known to all. It is a characteristic thing that the decision to remove him from the Political Bureau was never discussed but was reached in a devious fashion. In the same way came the decision concerning the removal of Kuznetsov and Rodionov from their posts.

The importance of the Central Committee's Political Bureau was reduced and its work was disorganised by the creation within the Political Bureau of various commissions—the so-called "Quintets," "Sextets," "Septets," and "Novenaries." Here is, for instance, a resolution of the Political Bureau of October 3, 1946.

"Stalin's proposal :

"1. The Political Bureau Commission for Foreign Affairs ("Sextet") is to concern itself in the future, in addition to foreign

affairs, also with matters of internal construction and domestic policy.

"2. The Sextet is to add to its roster the Chairman of the State Commission of Economic Planning of the U.S.S.R., Comrade Voznesensky, and is to be known as a Septet."

"Signed: Secretary of the Central Committee, J Stalin."

What a terminology of a card player! (Laughter in the hall.) It is clear that the creation within the Political Bureau of this type of commissions—"Quintets," "Sextets," "Septets," and "Novenaries"—was against the principle of collective leadership. The result of this was that some members of the Political Bureau were in this way kept away from participation in reaching decisions on the most important State matters.

One of the oldest members of our party, Kliment Yefremovich Voroshilov, found himself in an almost impossible situation. For several years he was actually deprived of the right of participation in Political Bureau sessions. Stalin forbade him to attend the Political Bureau sessions and to receive documents. When the Political Bureau was in session and Comrade Voroshilov heard about it, he telephoned each time and asked whether he would be allowed to attend. Sometimes Stalin permitted it, but always showed his dissatisfaction.

Because of his extreme suspicion, Stalin toyed also with the absurd and ridiculous suspicion that Voroshilov was an English agent. (Laughter in the hall.)* It's true—an English agent! A special tapping device was installed in his home to listen to what was said there. (Indignation in the hall.)

By unilateral decision Stalin also separated one other man from the work of the Political Bureau—Andrey Andreyevich Andreyev. This was one of the most unbridled acts of wilfulness.

Let us consider the first Central Committee plenum held after the nineteenth Party Congress when Stalin, in his talk at the plenum, characterised Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov and Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan and suggested that these old workers of our party were guilty on some baseless charges. It is not excluded that had Stalin remained at the helm for another several months Comrades Molotov and Mikoyan would probably have not delivered any speeches at this Congress.

Stalin evidently had plans to finish off the old members of the Political Bureau. He often stated that Political

Bureau members should be replaced by new ones.

His proposal, after the nineteenth congress concerning the selection of 25 persons to the Central Committee Presidium, was aimed at the removal of the old Political Bureau members and the bringing in of less experienced persons so that these would extol him in all sorts of ways.

We can assume that this also was a design for the future annihilation of the old Political Bureau members and in this way the cover for all shameful acts of Stalin, acts which we are now considering.

Comrades! In order not to repeat errors of the past, the Central Committee has declared itself resolutely against the cult of the individual. We consider that Stalin was excessively extolled. However, in the past Stalin doubtless performed great services to the party, to the working class, and to the international workers' movement.

This question is complicated by the fact that all this which we have just discussed was done during Stalin's life under his leadership and with his concurrence; here Stalin was convinced that this was necessary for the defence of the interests of the working classes against the plotting of the enemies and against the attack of the imperialist camp. He saw this from the position of the interest of the working class, of the interest of the labouring people, of the interest of the victory of socialism and communism. We cannot say that these were the deeds of a giddy despot. He considered that this should be done in the interest of the party, of the working masses, in defence of the Revolution's gains. In this lies the whole tragedy.

Comrades! Lenin had often stressed that modesty is an absolutely integral part of a real Bolshevik. Lenin himself was the living personification of the greatest modesty. We do not say that we have been following this Leninist example in all respects. It is enough to point out that many towns, factories, and industrial enterprises, kolkhozes and sovkhoses, Soviet institutions and cultural institutions have been referred to by us with a title—if I may express it so—of the private property of the names of Government or party leaders who were still active and in good health. Many of us participated in the action of assigning our names to various towns, radio stations, undertakings, and kolkhozes. We must correct this. (Applause.)

But this should be done calmly and slowly. The Central Committee will discuss this matter and consider it carefully in order to prevent errors and excesses. I can remember how the Ukraine learned about Kossior's arrest. The Kiev radio used to start its pro-

*There was no "laughter in the hall" earlier in Khrushchev's speech, when he referred with approval to the trial of Beria who, it will be recalled, was accused among other things of being an imperialist agent.

grammes thus: "This is Radio Kossior." When one day the programmes began without naming Kossior everyone was quite certain that something had happened to Kossior, that he had probably been arrested.

Thus, if to-day we begin to remove the signs everywhere and to change names, people will think that these comrades in whose honour the given enterprises, kolkhozes, or cities are named also met some bad fate and that they have also been arrested. (Animation in the hall).

How is the authority and the importance of this or that leader judged? On the basis of how many towns, industrial enterprises and factories, kolkhozes and sovkhoses carry his name. Is it not about time that we eliminate this "private property" and "nationalise" the factories, the industrial enterprises, the kolkhozes, and sovkhoses? (Laughter, applause, voices: "That is right.") This will benefit our cause. After all the cult of the individual is manifested also in this way.

We should in all seriousness consider the question of the cult of the individual. We cannot let this matter get out of the party, especially not to the press. It is for this reason that we are considering it here at a closed congress session. We should know the limits; we should not give ammunition to the enemy; we should not wash our dirty linen before their eyes. I think that the delegates to the congress will understand and assess properly all these proposals. (Tumultuous applause.)

Comrades! We must abolish the cult of the individual decisively, once and for all; we must draw the proper conclusions concerning both ideological-theoretical and practical work.

It is necessary for this purpose:

First, in a Bolshevik manner, to condemn and to eradicate the cult of the individual as alien to Marxism-Leninism and not consonant with the principles of party leadership and the norms of party life, and to fight inexorably all attempts at bringing back this practice in one form or another.

To return to and actually practise in all our ideological work the most important theses of Marxist-Leninist science about the people as the creator of history and as the creator of all material and spiritual good of humanity, about the decisive rôle of the Marxist party in the revolutionary fight for the transformation of society, about the victory of communism.

In this connection we will be forced to do much work in order to examine critically from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint and to correct the widespread erroneous views connected with the cult

of the individual in the sphere of history, philosophy, economy, and of other sciences, as well as in literature and the fine arts. It is especially necessary that in the immediate future we compile a serious textbook of the history of our party which will be edited with scientific Marxist objectivity, a textbook of the history of Soviet society, a book pertaining to the events of the Civil War and the great patriotic war.

Secondly, to continue systematically and consistently the work done by the party's Central Committee during the last years, a work characterised by minute observance in all party organisations, from the bottom to the top, of the Leninist principles of party leadership, characterised, above all, by the main principle of collective leadership, characterised by the observance of the norms of party life described in the statutes of our party, and finally, characterised by the wide practice of criticism and self-criticism.

Thirdly, to restore completely the Leninist principles of Soviet Socialist democracy, expressed in the Constitution of the Soviet Union, to fight the wilfulness of individuals abusing their power. The evil caused by acts violating revolutionary Socialist legality which have accumulated during a long time as a result of the negative influence of the cult of the individual has to be completely corrected.

Comrades! The twentieth congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union has manifested with a new strength the unshakable unity of our party, its cohesiveness around the Central Committee, its resolute will to accomplish the great task of building communism. (Tumultuous applause.) And the fact that we present in all their ramifications the basic problems of overcoming the cult of the individual which is alien to Marxism-Leninism, as well as the problem of liquidating its burdensome consequences, is evidence of the great moral and political strength of our party. (Prolonged applause.)

We are absolutely certain that our party, armed with the historical resolutions of the twentieth congress, will lead the Soviet people along the Leninist path to new successes, to new victories. (Tumultuous, prolonged applause.)

Long live the victorious banner of our party—Leninism! (Tumultuous, prolonged applause ending in standing ovation.)

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